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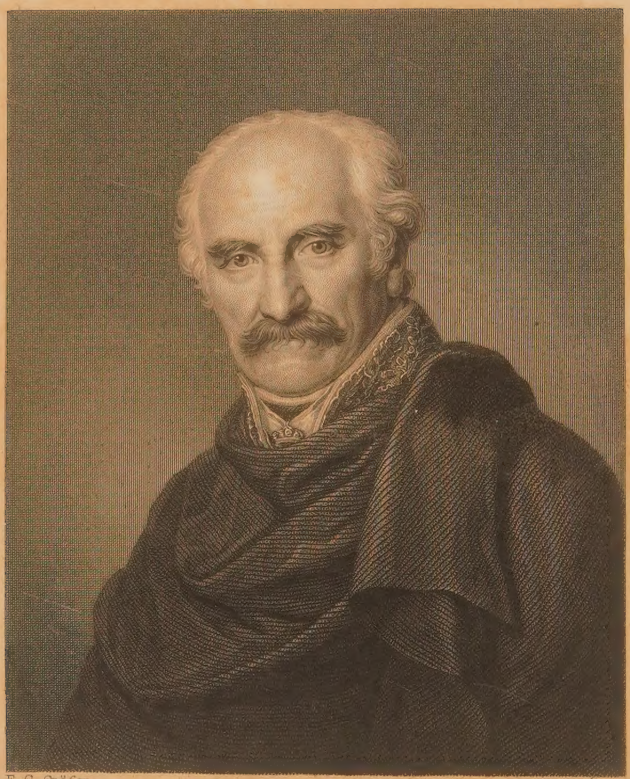
# HISTORY OF EUROPE

"BELLUM maxime omnium memorabile, quæ unquam gesta sint, me scripturum; quod, Hannibale duce, Carthaginienses cum populo Romano gessêre. Nam neque validiores opibus ullæ inter se civitates gentesque contulerunt arma, neque his ipsis tantum unquam virium aut roboris fuit: et haud ignotas belli artes inter se, sed expertas, primo Punico conserebant bello: odiis etiam prope majoribus certârunt quàm viribus: et adeo varia belli fortuna ancepsque Mars fuit, ut propius periculum fuerint qui vicerunt."—LIVY, lib. xxi.



F. C. Gröger. T. W. Harland.

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# HISTORY OF EUROPE

FROM

THE COMMENCEMENT OF

# THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

TO THE

RESTORATION OF THE BOURBONS
IN MDCCCXV

BY

ARCHIBALD ALISON, L.L.D.
F.R.S.E.

New Edition, with Portraits

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# HISTORY OF EUROPE.

## CHAPTER LXXIX.

### ARMISTICE OF PLESWITZ.



1813.

1. Diplomatic relations in the commencement of 1813.

GREAT were the efforts made by the English cabinet to turn to the best account the unhoped-for flood of good fortune which set in during the first months of 1813. It was hard to say whether the alacrity of the nation in submitting, in the twentieth year of the war, to fresh burdens; or the boundless generosity with which supplies of every sort were sent to the insurgent nations of Germany; or the efforts made to strengthen the victorious army of Wellington in Spain; or the diplomatic activity which hushed separate interests, and reconciled jarring pretensions, in the conclusion of the alliances with cabinets, were most worthy of admiration. Lofty and commanding, indeed, was the position of Great Britain, in thus finding the Continental states, after so long a contest, ranging themselves around her standard, and the jealousies of rival governments merged in the common sense of the necessity, at all hazards, of throwing off the tyranny which previously she alone had uniformly and successfully opposed. But many serious obstacles were to be overcome before this consummation could be effected; and diplomatic difficulties of no ordinary kind awaited the statesman whose perseverance at length smoothed them all away,

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1813.

2. First Convention between Great Britain, Russia, and Prussia. April 28.

and cemented, out of such discordant materials, the glorious fabric of the Grand Alliance.

The decided step taken by Prussia in seceding from the French alliance, and uniting her fate to that of Russia by the treaty of Kalisch, at once and without any formal convention re-established amicable relations between the cabinet of Berlin and that of London. Long before any diplomatic connexion had been resumed between them, immense supplies of arms, ammunition, and warlike stores of every description, had been forwarded from the Thames to the mouth of the Elbe, from whence they were disseminated through the whole Prussian dominions.[1] To accelerate the conclusion of a regular treaty, Sir Charles Stewart, now the Marquis of Londonderry, was sent by the British government to the north of Germany early in April, and arrived in Berlin on the 22d of that month. Finding the King of Prussia at Dresden, he instantly pushed on to that city; and there the terms of the alliance were at once agreed upon. They were—that England, in addition to the vast stores of arms and military implements which she was furnishing with such profusion to all the Allied powers, should advance two millions sterling to sustain the operations of the Prince-Royal of Sweden in the north of Germany, and a like sum to enable Russia and Prussia to keep up the great armaments which they had on foot in the centre of Saxony; besides five hundred thousand pounds with which the British government charged itself as the cost of the Russian fleet. In return for these liberal advances, Russia agreed to maintain two hundred, and Prussia one hundred thousand men in the field, exclusive of garrisons; and on this basis matters remained till the conclusion of the armistice of Pleswitz.[2]

[1] *Vide* List of these Stores, *Ante*, ch. lxxv. § 12, note.

April 26.

[2] Lond. 5, 13. Hard. xii, 180, 182.

No sooner, however, were the Allied sovereigns delivered, by that armistice, from the pressure of impending hostilities, than they turned their attention to drawing closer their diplomatic relations with Great Britain; and

1813.

as both Sir Charles Stewart and Earl Cathcart, the English ambassador at the court of St Petersburg, were at the Allied headquarters, a treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, was soon concluded. By this treaty, signed at Reichenbach on 14th June, the foundation was laid of the Grand Alliance which effected the deliverance of Europe. It was stipulated that England should pay to Prussia, for the six remaining months of the year, a subsidy of £666,666, in consideration of which the latter power was to keep in the field an army of eighty thousand men. Two separate and important articles were inserted in the secret treaty. By the first of these, the British government engaged "to contribute its efforts to the aggrandisement of Prussia, if the success of the Allied arms would admit of it, in such geographical and statistical proportions as should *at least restore it to the situation in which it stood prior to* 1806;" while by the second, the King of Prussia agreed to cede to the Electorate of Hanover a part of his possessions in Lower Saxony and Westphalia, to the extent of three hundred thousand souls, including, in particular, the bishopric of Hildesheim.[1]

3. Treaty of Reichenbach between Great Britain and Prussia. June 14.

[1] See the Treaty in Martens' Sup. xii. 571; and Ann. Reg. 113. State Papers, 357; and Secret Articles in Schoell, x. 255.

By another and relative treaty, signed the day after, between Russia and Great Britain, it was stipulated that Great Britain should pay to its Emperor, till 1st January 1814, an annual subsidy of £1,333,334, by monthly portions, in return for which he was to maintain one hundred and sixty thousand men in the field, independent of the garrisons of strong places. In addition to this, England took upon herself the maintenance of the Russian fleet, which, with its crews, had been in the harbours of Great Britain ever since the convention of Cintra in 1808,[2] a burden estimated at £500,000 yearly. As these subsidies, great as they were, appeared to be inadequate to the daily increasing cost of the enormous armaments which the Allies had on foot, or in preparation; and as, in particular, they were likely to be rendered unavailing by the want of specie, which was everywhere

4. Treaty with Russia.

[2] *Ante*, ch. liv. § 75.

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most severely felt, it was stipulated that an issue of paper, to the extent of five millions sterling, should take place in the Prussian states, guaranteed by the three powers. Of this sum two-thirds were to be at the disposal of Russia, and one-third at that of Prussia. The ultimate liquidation of the notes, which were payable to bearer, was fixed for the 1st July 1815, or six months after the conclusion of a definitive treaty of peace, and undertaken in the proportion of three-sixths by England, two-sixths by Russia, and one-sixth by Prussia. And although the treaty, by its letter, was to continue only during the year 1813, yet the high contracting parties, both in this and the Prussian treaty, agreed to concert anew on the aid they were to afford each other in the event of the war being prolonged beyond that period; and, in particular, "reciprocally engaged not to negotiate separately with their common enemies, nor to sign any peace, truce, or convention whatsoever, otherwise than with mutual consent."[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1813, 355. State Papers, Martens, xii. 568. Schoell, x. 255, 256.

5. Convention of Peterswalde. July 6.

A supplementary treaty was signed between Great Britain and Russia at Peterswalde, on 6th July, for the regulation of the German legion in the service of the Czar. It was stipulated that the expense of this legion, which was to be raised to ten thousand men, should be undertaken by the British government, and that, in return, it should be placed at their disposal, and officered according to their recommendation. The estimated annual expense of each man was taken at £10, 15s. overhead, including pay and provisions—a curious and valuable fact, as indicating the wide difference between the cost of military armaments on the Continent and in this country, where the charges per head are at least three times as great.[2]

[2] Martens' Sup. xii. 573. Schoell, x. 256. Ann. Reg. 1813; State Papers, 357, 359.

So excessive did the want of specie become in Germany, in the autumnal months of this year, from the enormous demands of the multitudes of armed men who were assembled within a narrow space on its surface, that England was again obliged to interpose its inexhaustible

public credit to supply the deficiency. By a supplementary convention, signed at London on the 30th September, the government of Great Britain engaged to propose to parliament a measure whereby bills of credit in favour of the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia should be issued by the English exchequer, to the extent of two million five hundred thousand pounds, or fifteen million Prussian crowns (thalers;) one million to be put monthly into circulation, and payable in specie a month after the ratification of a general peace, at offices in such towns in the north of Germany as the British government, in concert with the courts of St Petersburg and Berlin, should point out. An option was given to the holders, instead of receiving payment in specie at that period, to fund them in a stock bearing six per cent interest. A similar treaty was, on the same day, signed with Prussia, which power obtained one-third of the proposed sum; the other two-thirds being at the disposal of Russia. These stipulations were immediately carried into effect by the British government; the issue took place, and had the effect of instantly providing the requisite supply of circulating medium in Germany and Russia, which passed at par with specie through all the north of Europe. To the supply of money obtained, and the extension of credit effected by this bold but withal wise and necessary step, at the critical moment when it was most required, and when all human efforts but for it must have been unavailing, the successful issue of the war and overthrow of Napoleon are mainly to be ascribed. The difference was immense between this limited issue of paper, suited to the exigencies of the moment, and no more, and the boundless profusion of French assignats, which destroyed property of every description, and in the end ruined the very credit it was intended to support.[1] A memorable instance of the wonderful power of national credit on human transactions, and of the marvellous effect of a paper circulation when based on right principles, and resting on

6. Convention of London regarding the issue of paper money. Sept. 30.

[1] See Convention in Martens' Sup. xii. 577; and Schoell, x. 261, 262; and Ann. Reg. 1813. State Papers, 361.

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a solid basis. It affords a proof also of the inexhaustible resources of a country which was thus able, at the close of a war of twenty years' duration, not only to furnish subsidies of vast amount to the Continental states, but to guarantee the circulation of their own dominions, and cause its notes of hand to pass like gold through vast empires, which, extending from the Elbe to the wall of China, but a few months before had been arrayed in inveterate hostility against it.

7. Treaty of Stockholm with Sweden. March 3, 1813.

With Sweden also, a treaty, already alluded to, had been concluded at an earlier period, which in the end was attended with the most important consequences to the deliverance of Europe. By this treaty, signed at Stockholm on the 3d March 1813, it was provided that the King of Sweden should employ a body of thirty thousand men, to act in concert with the Russian troops in such operations as should be agreed on in the north of Germany; in consideration of which the British government agreed to pay yearly the sum of one million pounds, by monthly instalments. Great Britain engaged to cede the island of Guadaloupe in the West Indies to Sweden, and Sweden promised to give the British subjects the right of entrepot in the three harbours of Goteborg, Carlshamm, and Stralsund. Finally, the British government acceded to the convention already concluded between the cabinets of St Petersburg and Stockholm for the cession of Norway in perpetuity to the Swedish crown, and engaged, if necessary, to employ their naval co-operation along with the Swedish or Russian forces. This last article has been severely condemned by the French writers, as an adoption by the Allies of Napoleon's system of transferring kingdoms and spoliating crowns. But in answer to this it is enough to observe, that though Russia, prior to Napoleon's invasion, had been in amity with the cabinet of Denmark, yet that power had adhered to his standard when the war of 1812 commenced; and against England the Danish court had been in a state of

violent hostility ever since 1807. Having thus made their election to cast in their fortunes with the Emperor Napoleon, they had no right to complain if they underwent the fate of war from his and their own enemies. It is not the conquests wrested at the close of the war from his enemies, but those seized during peace from his allies, which form the ground of the real reproach to the system of the French Emperor.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1813. State Papers, 356. Martens' Sup. xii. 556. Schoell, x. 207.

8. Alliance of France and Denmark. July 10.

While the Allies were thus strengthening themselves by alliance for the great struggle in which they were engaged, Napoleon, on his part, had only one additional ally whom he gained, and that was Denmark, with whom a treaty, offensive and defensive, was concluded on the 10th July, at Dresden. The English government had made an ill-concerted attempt some time previously to compel the court of Copenhagen to join the Grand Alliance; and for this purpose a squadron appeared before Copenhagen, and demanded a categorical answer within forty-eight hours, under the pain of bombardment. This measure, which, if supported by an adequate armament, might have been attended with the happiest effects, failed from the want of any military or naval force capable of carrying it into execution; and shortly after, the treaty, offensive and defensive, was signed between France and Denmark. By this treaty it was stipulated that France should declare war against Sweden, and Denmark against Russia, within twenty hours after the denunciation of the armistice, concur with all their forces for the common object, and mutually guarantee each other's possessions. This alliance secured to the French troops a considerable support at the mouth of the Elbe, and the aid of twenty thousand good troops—a succour of no inconsiderable importance, considering the advanced position of Marshal Davoust at Hamburg, and the importance of providing a counterpoise to the Crown-Prince of Sweden in the north of Germany.[2]

May 31.

July 10.

[2] See Treaty in Martens' Sup. i. 539. Jom. iv. 315. Fain, ii. 15.

Austria, however, was the important power which, in

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9. Importance of the position which Austria now held.

reality, held the balance between the hostile parties; and her forces, hourly accumulating behind the Bohemian hills, threatened to pour down with irresistible force upon whichever party ventured to dispute her will. In physical strength, the Allies and Napoleon, as the indecisive result of the late battles proved, were very nearly matched. France, Bavaria, and the Confederation of the Rhine, supported by Italy on the one flank, and Denmark on the other, were superior in number of inhabitants and resources to Russia, Prussia, and Sweden; while the land forces of England were wholly absorbed in the Mediterranean and Peninsular contests. It was Austria, therefore, with her hundred and fifty thousand men, in the central salient bastion of Bohemia, which in reality held the balance; and it was hard for an ordinary observer to say to which side she was likely to incline. For, if the direction of the Allied armies to Upper Silesia, and their abandonment of their natural line of communication with the Oder and the Vistula, indicated a reliance upon the secret favour of the cabinet of Vienna, the family alliance between Napoleon and the house of Hapsburg might be expected to lead to an opposite inclination; and it was difficult to imagine that the Emperor of Austria would be inclined in the end to push matters to such extremities as to endanger the throne of his own daughter.[1]

[1] Hard. xii. 177, 179. Jom. iv. 316, 317.

10. Views of the Austrian cabinet at this period.

In truth, however, the views of Austria at this period were sufficiently matured; and it was only the extreme circumspection with which her cabinet carried them into execution that occasioned any doubt as to their tendency. Metternich, who at that period had come to acquire that direction of the cabinet of Vienna which he has ever since enjoyed, was too clear-sighted not to perceive the extraordinary advantages which fortune had now thrown in his way; and he was determined, if possible, to render them the means of regaining the lost possessions, and restoring the tarnished lustre of the Austrian crown. He was too well aware of the insatiable ambition by which

Napoleon was actuated, as well as the warlike influences from within to which he was subject, to place the slightest reliance on the promises of moderation now so prodigally lavished by him; and he saw little proof of such a disposition in the determination openly avowed to avenge the defection of Prussia by entire extinction, and thereby render himself the undisputed master of Germany. By his advice, therefore, the bait thrown out of restoring Silesia to the house of Hapsburg was refused; and the cabinet of Vienna came under engagements, conditional indeed, but sufficiently explicit to authorise the King of Prussia to announce publicly in his proclamation of 7th May,—"that in a few hours *another power* would join itself to the cause of the Allies."[1]

May 7. [1] Schoell. v. 241. Hard. xii. 177, 178. Jom. iv. 316.

11. Which were not affected by the issue of the battles of Lützen and Bautzen.

And although the unforeseen issue of the battles of Lützen and Bautzen suspended the realisation of this announcement, and threw Saxony, which was all but engaged in a similar policy, into the arms of France, yet, in truth, there was no variation of purpose on the part of the cabinet of Vienna. On the contrary, they were only the more determined, on account of the near balance of the contending parties, to turn to the best account their all-important function as armed mediators. Not only the Illyrian provinces, but Lombardy and the Tyrol, were now openly talked of as restorations to be demanded; and the restitution of the Papal dominions, and dissolution of the Confederacy of the Rhine, as concessions to be strongly contended for. Still Austria was most anxious, if she possibly could, to avoid drawing the sword; and would greatly have preferred gaining these advantages by the weight of her armed mediation to submitting them to the doubtful fortune of arms. But she was determined to appeal to that issue if her objects could not be otherwise gained; and these views were clearly evinced in the choice she made of ambassadors to send to the headquarters of the opposite parties. Stadion, the avowed enemy of the French Emperor, was despatched to those of the

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Allies, and Count Bubna, the declared advocate of peace, to those of Napoleon; while the Emperor Francis himself repaired to the castle of Gitschen in Bohemia, to be near the theatre of the important diplomatic negotiations, by which, to all appearance, the fate of Europe would be determined.[1]

[1] Hard. xii. 177, 179. Jom. iv. 316. Schoell, x. 241.

12. Commencement of the negotiations with the belligerent powers.

Little progress was made during the first three weeks of the armistice in the work of negotiation. Difficulties arose from the very outset as to the form in which, and the parties by whom, they should be conducted. The Allied sovereigns were desirous that their plenipotentiaries should not treat directly with those of France; but that both parties should address themselves to Austria as the mediating power. This proposition was strongly supported by Prince Metternich on the part of the cabinet of Vienna. To solve this difficulty, he came in person to Gitschen, and an active correspondence there took place between him and Maret on the part of the French Emperor. In the course of these letters, Maret strongly insisted for a categorical answer to the question, whether France was to regard Austria as still its ally under the treaty of 14th March 1812. To this Metternich replied, that the duties of a mediator were noways inconsistent with those of an ally under the existing treaty; and therefore, that he at once agreed to a convention, to supply whatever was wanting in the original treaty, and strongly urged all the powers to send plenipotentiaries to Gitschen to conclude a general pacification. It was at length agreed that, to preserve the independence essential to the due discharge of the duties of a mediator, the alliance should not be considered as broken, but only *suspended*—an equivocal expression, which Napoleon justly considered as equivalent to its entire dissolution.[2]

June 15.

[2] Maret to Metternich, 15th June 1813. Metternich to Maret, 28th June, 1813. Fain, ii. 121, 139.

The next point upon which difficulties arose, was the form in which the negotiations should be conducted; and upon this matter the variance was such, that Metternich repaired to Dresden in person, in order to arrange the basis

13. Interview between Napoleon and Metternich, June 28. Remarkable speech of the former.

of the proposed mediation with the Emperor; and discussions of the highest interest and importance took place between them. They were prolonged till past midnight; and the account of them has been preserved by Baron Fain, his private secretary, and bears all the stamp of originality and truth. "You are welcome, Metternich," said Napoleon, as soon as he was introduced, "but wherefore so late? We have lost nearly a month, and your mediation, from its long inactivity, has become almost hostile. It appears that it no longer suits your cabinet to guarantee the integrity of the French empire: be it so; but why had you not the candour to make me acquainted with that determination at an earlier period? It might have modified my plans, perhaps prevented me from continuing the war. When you allowed me to exhaust myself by new efforts, you doubtless little calculated on such rapid events as have ensued. I have gained, nevertheless, two battles; my enemies, severely weakened, were beginning to waken from their illusions, when suddenly you glided in amongst us, and, addressing me in the language of armistice and mediation, you spoke to them of alliance and war. But for your pernicious intervention, peace would have been at this moment concluded between the Allies and myself.[1]

[1] Fain, ii. 34, 35.

14. His statement of the designs of Austria.

"What have hitherto been the fruits of your interference? I know of none except the treaties of Reichenbach between Russia, Prussia, and Great Britain. They speak of the accession of a fourth power to these conventions; but you have Stadion on the spot, and must be better informed on these particulars than I am. You cannot deny, that since she has assumed the office of mediator, Austria has not only ceased to be my ally, but has become my enemy. You were about to declare yourselves so when the battle of Lützen intervened, and by showing you the necessity of augmenting your forces, made you desirous of gaining time. You have your two hundred thousand men ready screened by the Bohemian

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hills; Schwartzenberg commands them; at this very moment he is concentrating them in my rear; and it is because you conceive yourself in a condition to dictate the law that you have come to pay this visit. I see through you, Metternich; your cabinet wishes to profit by my embarrassments, and to augment them as much as possible, in order to recover a portion of what you have lost. The only difficulty you have is, whether you can gain your object without fighting, or whether you must throw yourselves boldly among the combatants: you do not know well which of these lines to adopt, and possibly you have come here to seek more light on the subject. Well, what do you want? Let us treat." [1]

[1] Fain, ii. 36, 38. Hard. xii. 191, 192.

15. Metternich's reply.

To this vehement attack, which embodied more truth than he was willing to admit, Metternich replied, with studied address:—"The sole advantage which the Emperor, my master, proposes, or wishes to derive from the present state of affairs, is, the influence which a spirit of moderation, and a respect for the rights and possessions of independent states, cannot fail to acquire from those who are animated by similar sentiments. Austria wishes to establish a state of things which, by a wise distribution of power, may place the guarantee of peace under the protection of an association of independent states."—"Speak more clearly," interrupted the Emperor; "come at once to the point; but do not forget that I am a soldier who would rather break than bend. I have offered you Illyria to remain neutral; will that suffice? My army is amply sufficient to bring back the Russians and Prussians to reason: all that I ask of you is, to withdraw from the strife."—"Ah! sire," said Metternich, eagerly, "why should your majesty enter singly into the strife? why should you not double your forces? You may do so, sire! It depends only on you to add our forces to your own. Yes, matters have come to that point that we can no longer remain neutral: we must be either for you or against you."

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16. Napoleon's reply.

At these words the Emperor conducted Metternich into a cabinet apart, the tables of which were covered with maps, and for some time their conversation could not be overheard. In a little, however, the voice of Napoleon was again audible above its ordinary pitch. "What! not only Illyria, but the half of Italy, and the return of the Pope to Rome, and Poland, and the abandonment of Spain, Holland, the Confederation of the Rhine, and Switzerland! And this is what you call the spirit of moderation! You are intent only on profiting by every chance which offers: you alternately transport your alliance from one camp to the other, in order to be always a sharer in the spoil, and you yet speak to me of your respect for the rights of independent states! You would have Italy; Russia, Poland; Sweden, Norway; Prussia, Saxony; and England, Holland and Belgium: in fine, peace is only a pretext; you are all intent on dismembering the French empire! And Austria thinks she has only to declare herself to crown such an enterprise! You pretend here, with a stroke of the pen, to make the ramparts of Dantzic, Cüstrin, Glogau, Magdeburg, Wesel, Mayence, Antwerp, Alessandria, Mantua—in fine, all the strong places of Europe, sink before you, of which I only obtained possession by the force of victories! And I, obedient to your policy, am to evacuate Europe, of which I still hold the half; recall my legions across the Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees; subscribe a treaty which would be nothing but a vast capitulation; and place myself at the mercy of those of whom I am at this moment the conqueror! And it is when my standards still float at the mouths of the Vistula and on the banks of the Oder; when my victorious army is at the gates of Berlin and Breslau; when in person I am at the head of three hundred thousand men; that Austria, without striking a blow, without drawing a sword, expects to make me subscribe such conditions! And it is my father-in-law that has matured such a project; it is he that

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sends you on such a mission! In what position would he place me in regard to the French people? Does he suppose that a dishonoured and mutilated throne can be a refuge in France for his son-in-law and grandson? *Ah! Metternich, how much has England given you to make war upon me?*"[1]*

[1] Fain, ii. 41, 42. Hard. xii. 193, 194.

17. Calm conduct of Metternich, and convention between Austria and France for a mediation.

This violent apostrophe was delivered while Napoleon, strongly excited, was striding up and down the apartment: and at the last insulting expression, which nothing in the character or conduct of the Austrian diplomatist could for an instant justify, the Emperor let his hat, which he held in his hand, fall to the ground. Metternich turned pale, but without making the movement to raise it, which his studied politeness would at any other moment have dictated, suffered him to pass and repass it several times, and at length the Emperor kicked it aside himself. After a pause of nearly half an hour's duration, during which he walked in moody silence up and down the room, Napoleon became more tractable; and, reverting to fair words, contended only for a congress, which should continue its sittings even during hostilities, in case they should recommence. A convention in consequence was agreed upon, by which it was stipulated that the congress should meet at Prague, at latest on the 5th July, and that Austria should use her endeavours (*faire agréer*) to procure the prolongation of the armistice to the 10th August. The convention set out with the Emperor of Austria's offer of his mediation, which was accepted by the Emperor Napoleon, "for a general or continental peace." By this means, Metternich gained a great advantage over Napoleon, inasmuch

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* The authenticity and accuracy of this remarkable conversation, and the anecdote which follows, formerly rested only on Baron Fain's account of the scene, which, although worthy of all credit from the character of the writer, might be supposed to be a little influenced by his evident partiality for the French hero in whose service he was; but it is now entirely confirmed, in every particular, by the corroborating testimony of Capefigue, who derived his information, as to its correctness, from Metternich himself.—See CAPEFIGUE, *Histoire de l'Empire*, x. 141, and *Diplomates Européens*, p. 207, (METTERNICH.)

as he drove him out of his favourite project of a convention of separate powers to treat for peace. Nothing definitive was fixed as to the duration of the armistice; and he won him over to the acceptance of Austria's mediation, which he had so much at heart, and which was so obviously calculated to augment the influence of that country in the approaching negotiations.[1]

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[1] Fain, ii. 43. 44, 46. Hard. xii. 194, 196. Cap. Dip. Europ. 217.

Nothing definitive, however, was as yet settled as to the intentions of Austria: she had gained her object of interposing her mediation between the belligerent powers; but it was uncertain to which side she would ultimately incline, and Metternich had openly avowed, that if the French Emperor would accede to the terms which he proposed, she would throw her whole two hundred thousand men into the scale in his favour. But at this decisive moment, big with the fate of Europe and of the world, the star of England prevailed, and Wellington, with irresistible force, cast his sword into the balance. On the morning of the 30th June, on the evening of which day the convention just mentioned with Austria was signed, Napoleon had received by express the details of the BATTLE OF VITORIA, by which a deathblow had been given to the French power in the Peninsula, and his armies had been swept as by a whirlwind from the north and west of Spain. The Allied powers received the intelligence late on the evening before. It was not difficult to see, therefore, to what cause the French Emperor's ready accession to the convention had been owing. Metternich had no sooner regained the Emperor of Austria's headquarters, than he also received the same important intelligence, which was followed a few days after by the most complete proof of the decisive nature of the victory, in the announcement that, six days after the battle was fought—viz. on the 27th June—not one man of the seventy thousand who there combated under the standards of Joseph remained on the Spanish territory.[2]

18. Intelligence is received by both parties of the battle of Vitoria. June 30.

June 30.

July 1.

July 6.

[2] Hard. xii. 196. Fain, ii. 64. Lond. 68. Thib. ix. 323. Bign. xii. 171.

Great and decisive was the influence which this immense

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19. Vast influence which it exercised on the issue of the negotiations.

achievement exercised on the conferences at Prague. "Metternich," says Fain, "could not fail to learn the details of this victory from the mouths of the English themselves, the moment he returned to Bohemia; and we shall soon see the *fatal influence* which it exercised on the progress of the negotiations."—"The impression of Lord Wellington's success," says Lord Londonderry, "was strong and universal, and produced ultimately, in my opinion, the recommencement of hostilities."* Nor is it surprising that the English and French diplomatists, then on the spot, should thus concur as to the influence of this great victory on the issue of the negotiations. The Peninsular contest was now decided; it was no longer a consummate general maintaining with inferior means a painful defensive conflict, but a victorious chief at the head of the military force of three nations, who, after expelling the enemy from the soil which they had polluted, was preparing to cross the frontier, and carry his triumphant standards into the heart of France. A hundred thousand men assembled round the standards of Wellington, awaited only the fall of the frontier fortresses to descend like a torrent from the Pyrenees, and inundate the valley of the Garonne. The charm of Napoleon's invincibility was at an end. Disaster had overtaken his arms alike in the south as in the north of Europe; no snows existed to extenuate the last calamity; and the only question Austria had to consider was, whether she should voluntarily ally herself to a sinking empire and a falling cause.[1]

[1] Fain, ii. Lond. 88. Bignon, xii. 171.

Fully impressed with the magnitude of the disaster, Napoleon took immediate and vigorous steps to arrest it. Aware that the disunion among his generals had been

* "Le 29, au soir, des nouvelles de Vitoria étaient arrivées, et sous l'influence d'un pareil événement, une discussion qui aurait retardé encore la signature d'une convention quelconque, pouvait avoir des suites funestes. On accepta donc le projet Autrichien, tel à peu près qu'il fut presenté, malgré la position funeste où nous plaçait l'Autriche, en nous laissant incertain sur la prolongation de l'armistice."—BIGNON, xii. 171, 172.

one great cause of the loss of the Peninsula, he immediately sent for the ablest of his marshals, Soult, and despatched him to the theatre of war in the Pyrenees, with full powers as "lieutenant of the Emperor," and with instructions to defend the passes of those mountains to the last extremity. At the same time, orders were despatched to Suchet to evacuate Valencia, and fall back behind the Ebro into Catalonia. Thus on all sides the vast fabric of French power in Spain was crumbling into ruins; a single blow on the decisive point had sufficed to lay the huge edifice, painfully raised during five successive years, and by fifty victories, in the dust.[1]

20. Soult is sent with extraordinary powers to Spain. July 2.

1 Fain, ii. 81. Hard. xii. 193, 199.

From this moment all prospect of peace was abandoned: the views of both parties were mainly directed to war, and the negotiations at Prague were used but as a cover, on both sides, to gain time for completing their preparations. On the 5th July, only four days after the disastrous intelligence from Spain had been received, Marshal St-Cyr set out on a special mission from the Emperor, to inspect the whole frontier passes into Bohemia, and report upon the forces necessary to guard them, and the amount of the enemy's troops which were collected behind the mountain screen. Meanwhile the Emperor in all directions made the most vigorous preparations for the resumption of hostilities. Making Dresden his headquarters, he was incessantly occupied in inspecting the fortifications of that city and the adjoining forts, reviewing the numerous *corps-d'armée* which were now assembled in its vicinity, or corresponding with the different marshals who were stationed so as to maintain the line of that river from the Bohemian mountains to the sea. One day he went by Torgau to Wittenberg, reviewing troops and inspecting the fortifications at both places; the next he set out by Dessau for Magdeburg, and thence returned by Leipsic to Dresden. On another occasion he minutely inspected the fortifications of Königstein, and the famous intrenched camp of Pirna, of which the mouldering lines

21. Napoleon's preparations for war.

July 5.

July 7.

July 9.

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were renovated and strengthened.* Such was his activity, that he not unfrequently made a circuit of seventeen or eighteen leagues on horseback, or in his carriage, in a single afternoon. When not actually inspecting the environs of Dresden, he was constantly poring over the map, with his battalions of many-coloured pins placed in almost every conceivable situation, sometimes in the Bohemian passes, sometimes in the Saxon plains; so that it was hardly possible that hostilities should take place on any ground with which he was not acquainted, or under any combination which he had not considered.[1]

[1] Odel. i. 221, 224. Fain, ii. 20, 21. St-Cyr, Hist. Mil. iv. 51.

22. His plans of the campaign, and measures for the defence of Dresden.

Atlas, Plate 85.

These minute investigations were preliminary to a design which Napoleon had profoundly conceived, and which he most ably carried into execution, of making Dresden the centre and pivot of his defensive line on the Elbe, and of taking his last stand there for the empire of Germany. The situation of the ground in its environs was eminently favourable to such a design. The Elbe, in issuing from Bohemia, makes its way into the Saxon plains between two huge rocks, which restrain the course of the river and master its direction. Their summits overlook the whole valley in which the river flows; that on the right bank is named the Lilienstein, that on the left the Königstein. These two immense piles of stone may be regarded as the advanced sentinels of Dresden. On the Königstein was already placed a fortress of the same name, which was altogether impregnable to open force, and at its foot stands the camp of Pirna, to which the wars of the great Frederick had given immortality. On the opposite rock, the Lilienstein, works were established which communicated by two bridges with Königstein, and the two together were intended to command the defile, and cover an intrenched camp for sixty thousand men. The lines of defence at this point extended from Gieshübel across to Stolpen, the ancient citadel of which,

* Erected during the Seven Years' War against the King of Prussia by the Saxon generals.

built on the flat summit of the basalt, was strengthened with additional works. The bridges which they commanded served as a communication, not only between the opposite fortresses, but between the armies on the right and left banks in Silesia and Lusatia. The traveller in the places now described, will recognise the well-known features of those magic scenes, where, amidst awful precipices, sable forests, sounding cataracts, and spacious streams, he regains in the heart of Germany the images and the enchantment of Alpine solitude.[1]

[1] Témoin Oculaire. Odel. ii. 141. Fain, ii. 20, 23. Personal observation.

23. Works around Dresden.

Nor was it only at the great mountain-gate from Bohemia into Saxony that the care of the Emperor was bestowed: Dresden itself was the object of his anxious solicitude. Being but imperfectly fortified, the gaps in its walls were filled up by ditches and palisades, which completed the circuit; the mouldering masonry of the old bastions was repaired, their ditches cleaned out and filled with water; while five large redoubts, connected together by strong palisades, were constructed farther out, the fire from which intersected the whole intervening space, and rendered it impossible to approach the town till part of them, at least, was taken. The value of these redoubts was strongly felt in the campaign which followed; they saved the French army from a deathblow within a few days after the resumption of hostilities. So anxious was the Emperor for their completion, that fifteen thousand peasants, drawn together by conscription from all parts of Saxony, were, during the armistice, employed constantly on them day and night. All the fortresses lower down the river were, in like manner, put in the best possible state of defence; cannon were mounted on their embrasures, and stores and provisions for a long siege laid in by convoys from France, and requisitions from the whole adjoining country.[2]

[2] Fain, ii. 24. Odel. i. 256.

24. And on the Lower Elbe.

Hamburg, in particular, which formed the last of this iron chain stretching along the Elbe, was strengthened with additional works, and its old rampart repaired and

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ditches cleaned out; while, under the able direction of General Haxo and Colonel Ponthon, new outworks were formed to a considerable distance round the walls, which carried the axe of desolation through the charming gardens and villas which had so long constituted the delight of that luxurious people. Their tears and entreaties were alike unavailing. The rising redoubt overwhelmed the scenes of festivity and the abode of joy; the disconsolate owners, turned adrift on the world, were ridiculed when they sought indemnification: while the methodical genius of Marshal Davoust, always fully alive when money was to be wrenched from a suffering people, contrived, during the six months of his occupation, to extract such immense sums from this industrious community, as would have been reckoned impossible by the generals of any other nation, and passed as fabulous in any other age but that, which saw the arts of extortion brought to perfection by the generals of the humane and philosophic French Revolution.[1]*

[1] Odel. i. 226. Fain, ii. 24.

25. Strength of this line of the Elbe.

By these means, though at the expense of an enormous amount of human suffering, a very strong line of defence was obtained on the Elbe. From the rocks of Königstein to the fields of Hamburg, a line of fortresses extended, some of the first order, others of inferior strength, but all calculated to impede the motions of the enemy, and afford to Napoleon the invaluable advantage of transferring the seat of his operations at pleasure from

* Davoust levied a contribution of 40,000,000 francs, or £1,600,000, on the city of Hamburg; and as the magistrates were utterly unable to produce such a sum, he took possession of the bank, and carried off the whole specie which it contained, amounting to more than half the sum, and levied the remainder without mercy from the inhabitants. Hamburg at this period contained about 107,000 inhabitants, being less than a third of the number at present in Glasgow; and, taking into view the difference between the value of money in the two countries, it may safely be affirmed, that this burden was much heavier in amount than four millions sterling would be upon Glasgow at the present time. Some idea may be formed, from this fact, of the enormous amount of the contributions levied by the French generals on the countries which they occupied, and which excited everywhere such unbounded exasperation against them. This, however, was but a small part of the losses sustained by the inhabitants;

one bank to the other. Königstein, Dresden, Torgau, Wittenberg, Magdeburg, Hamburg, formed a chain of formidable strongholds on the Elbe, of all of which he was master; while Merseburg, Erfurth, and Würtzburg composed his echelon fortified posts from that river to the Rhine. Erfurth in particular, which lay in the centre of, and commanded, the main line of communication with France, was the object of his particular solicitude. Large stores of provisions were already accumulated within its walls, and its rocky citadels assumed the aspect of formidable forts. The active genius of Napoleon, revolving the possible events of the campaign, was providing against all the changes which might occur; and while he was closing with iron gates the passes of the Bohemian mountains, and adding to the fortifications on the whole line of the Elbe, he was alternately preparing for a desperate defensive warfare on the Saxon plains, meditating a hostile irruption into the sands of Prussia, and taking measures for an eventual retreat to the banks of the Rhine.[1]

[1] Bout. Camp. de 1813, 5, 6. Nap. in Montholon, ii. 40. Fain, ii. 23, 24. Jom. iv. 363, 364.

26. Murmurs against those plans in the French army.

The magnitude and vigour, however, of the Emperor's preparations on the Elbe, clearly evinced to both his generals and soldiers his determination to make that river the base of a desperate defensive struggle, and gave rise to much discussion and many sinister presentiments in the army. Defensive warfare does not suit the genius of the French soldiers, and it accordingly has rarely, if ever, succeeded with them. Murmurs loud and long

for Davoust seized the merchandise, shipping, and movable property of every description that could be brought to sale, and disposed of them for the purposes of his army, insomuch that the total loss sustained by the inhabitants was estimated at four millions sterling. From the bank alone there was taken no less than 7,500,000 marks, or about £1,200,000. So sensible were the French government of these enormous spoliations, that by a treaty in 1816 they agreed to pay to Hamburg £500,000 by way of indemnity; which, however, did not amount to an eighth part of the actual amount of their loss. So dreadfully did the city suffer from these exactions, that its population in 1814 was reduced to 67,000 souls, instead of 107,000, which it contained when it was united to the French empire.—See MALTE-BRUN, *Lib.* 124, *voce* Hamburg; and CAPEFIGUE, x. 271.

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arose on all sides against the proposed plan of operations. "Austria," it was said, "by opening the gates of Bohemia to the Allied forces, will enable them to take the whole line of the Elbe in reverse. Is the Emperor about to expose himself to be cut off from France? Instead of so hazardous a project, would it not be more prudent to collect our garrisons from the Oder and the Elbe, leaving those on the Vistula to their fate, and, with all the troops which can be collected, retire to a defensive position on the Saale, and if necessary to the Rhine? Serious losses indeed will be incurred by such a system, and a cloud be thrown over the star of the empire; but can it any longer be maintained in its former brilliancy, and is it not better to lose a part than endanger the whole?"[1]

[1] Fain, ii. 25, 26.

27. Napoleon's reply.

These representations came from too respectable quarters, and were in themselves too much founded in common sense, to permit the Emperor entirely to disregard them; and therefore he laboured, in conversation with his marshals, to explain the grounds connected with the peculiarity of his situation, and the general interests of his empire, on which his plan of operations was based. "It is quite true," said he, "that you should not lightly hazard your line of communications—every tyro in the military art knows that. But at the same time, when great interests are wound up with the maintenance of a particular position, it must often be maintained at all hazards: we must have courage to apply the torch to our vessels. What would the defensive system which you advocate reduce us to?—losses greater than would result from the loss of ten pitched battles. We now require a complete triumph. The question is no longer the abandonment of such or such a position: our political superiority is at stake; the enemy would reduce it, and on it our existence depends. Are you afraid I shall be too much in the air in the heart of Germany? Was I not in a position still more hazardous at Marengo, Austerlitz, and Wagram? From Arcola to this day, all the import-

ant steps I have taken have been hazards of that description, and in so doing I have only followed the example of other illustrious conquerors.* If the enemy debouch from Bohemia in my rear, it will be precisely in order to compel the retrograde movement which you would have me voluntarily undertake. I am not in the air in Germany, when I rest on all the strong places of the Elbe.

28. Importance of the position of Dresden.

"Dresden is the pivot on which all my operations will turn. From Berlin to Prague, the enemy is disseminated over an immense circle of which I occupy the centre; his corps must make long detours to concentrate, whereas mine, moving on an interior line of communication, will not have half the ground to go over. Wherever I am not in person, my generals must learn to wait for me, without committing anything to hazard. Do you suppose it likely that the Allies will be able, for any length of time, to maintain the unity requisite for such extended operations? And may not I reasonably expect, sooner or later, to surprise them in some false movement? They will throw detached parties between the Elbe and the Rhine. I expect it—I am prepared for it. Independent of the garrisons of the fortresses on that line—Mayence, Wesel, Erfurth, Würtzburg—Augereau is collecting a corps of observation on the Maine. Should they have the audacity to interpose in force between our fortified lines on the Elbe and the Rhine, I will straight-

* Napoleon repeated the same opinion, after mature consideration, and a full experience of its effects, at St Helena. "Did Alexander, Hannibal, or Cæsar, occupy themselves about their line of retreat, when the moment had come to combat for the empire of the world? And what would have happened if Alexander had been beaten on the Indus, or Hannibal at Cannæ, or Cæsar on the promontory of Dyrrachium? In the campaign of 1805, I was about to have Prussia in my rear; I was engaged in the depths of Moravia; retreat across Germany was impossible; but nevertheless I conquered at Austerlitz. In 1806, when my columns entered the Thuringian forests, Austria was marching on my communications, and Spain was about to cross the Pyrenees; but I conquered at Jena. In 1809, when I had to contend with the waves of the Danube, Hungary and the Tyrol were insurgent on either flank, Prussia was preparing to descend to Franconia, and the English menaced Antwerp; but still I conquered at Wagram."—Napoleon *in* Montholon, ii. 11; and Las Cases, iii. 128, 129.

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way enter into Bohemia; and it is I who will threaten their rear. A few Cossacks, it is true, may insult our departments bordering on the Rhine, but the National Guard will suffice to repel them; and the transference of the seat of war to the gates of Mayence would be attended with consequences of a very different description. It is very natural that the Saxons should be desirous to remove the war from their territory; but is it our interest, as Frenchmen, to re-echo their complaints? It is in the Saxon plains that the fate of Germany is about to be decided. I repeat it: the position which I occupy presents such advantages, that the enemy, even though victorious in ten battles, could hardly force me back to the Rhine; while a single victory gained by me, by bringing our eagles to the capitals of the enemy, and delivering our garrisons on the Oder and the Vistula, would speedily bring the Allies to terms. I have calculated everything; fortune must now decide the event. However good my reasons may be, I know that I shall be judged of according to the event; it is the rigorous law of history."[1]

[1] Fain, ii. 29, 31.

29. Forces of Napoleon at the close of the armistice.

It was not surprising that the Emperor entertained such an opinion on his chances of success in the position which he held at Dresden, for the forces which he had accumulated for its defence were very great. By vast efforts, the conscripts and reserves had been so completely brought up to the Elbe, that the army ready to recommence hostilities was raised to four hundred thousand men, of whom nearly three hundred and fifty thousand were effective, and present with the eagles.* This

* These numbers are ascertained in an authentic manner, and on the best possible evidence—the confidential correspondence of Napoleon himself at that period with the marshals commanding his armies. On the 17th August 1813, he wrote to Marshal St Cyr:—"The army of Buntzlau, in Silesia, is 130,000 or 140,000 strong, independent of the Guard, which is 50,000. Poniatowsky, Kellerman, St Cyr, and Vandamme, have 70,000 opposite to Gabel in Bohemia. The Duke of Reggio is at the head of 80,000 men near Magdeburg, besides 10,000 in that fortress. The Prince of Echmühl is at the head of 25,000 French and 15,000 Danes at Hamburg; in Torgau and Wittenberg are 20,000.

immense body of men carried with them no less than twelve hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, of which two hundred were the redoubted artillery of the Guard, in the finest possible condition. The caissons were all replenished, vast military stores were collected, and the *matériel* of the army, generally speaking, was in good, that of the Guard in the most admirable, order. The cavalry was the only arm which was deficient. That of the reserve, under Murat, numbered only thirty thousand; the light horse attached to the different corps, fifteen thousand men. Money, however, was not wanting; the vaults of the Tuileries, the vast accumulations of the Emperor's smuggling, had poured forth their treasures with seasonable profusion; the whole corps of the army had received their pay, and ample funds existed to carry on the prodigious fortifications which were everywhere in progress, to render the line of the Elbe impregnable to the forces of combined Europe.[1]

[1] Fain, ii. 56, 226. 227. Jom. iv. 361. Bout. Camp. de 1813, 4, 5.

30. New measures of the Emperor to hasten the conscripts to the army.

It was by unheard-of exertions, however, and by wringing out of the country its last resources, that so vast a force had been concentrated for the defensive struggle in the heart of Germany. Aware of the decisive nature of the contest which was approaching, the Emperor had spared no efforts, either of his own or his lieutenants, to bring up every sabre and bayonet into the field. The frequent desertion of the conscripts, and numerous acts of license and pillage which attended their line of march, induced him to prepare an entirely new set of regulations for restraining these disorders, which were rigidly enforced. By them he succeeded in forcing on the refractory or reluctant levies to the scene of action.

It is clear that 400,000 *men, resting on such a chain of fortresses as those of the Elbe,* and which may at pleasure debouch by Dresden, Torgau, Wittenberg, and Magdeburg, are not to be turned."—See NAPOLEON *to* ST CYR, 17*th August* 1813: *to* DAVOUST, 13*th August* 1813; and *to* OUDINOT, 13*th August* 1813; ST CYR, *Histoire Militaire,* iv. 355, 358, 360, 367. *Pièces Just.* Jomini, accordingly, states—"The active army in Germany consisted, at the resumption of hostilities, of 400,000 men, with 1250 pieces of cannon."—JOMINI, *Vie de Napoleon,* iv. 361.

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Every conscript, from the time he was clothed and armed, was considered as disposable, and treated accordingly. The moment he was drawn, the young soldier was hurried off to the depôt, arrayed in uniform, armed, and that very day his military instruction commenced. As soon as a hundred were assembled, they were marched off, under the orders of a captain, to the headquarters of their regiment, and taught the manual and platoon exercise while walking along the road. Other companies were directed to the same line, and, as fast as they met, united together, so as to compose a battalion of march, as it was called; and these battalions again joined, so as to form a regiment of march. Before crossing the Rhine, these troops were arranged in columns of march, over the formation and organisation of which Marshal Kellermann, stationed at Mayence, presided. The most rigorous discipline was enforced upon these moving columns; and though it was inadequate to prevent dreadful disorders, consequent on the passage of such a multitude of young men just emancipated from the restraints of parental discipline, yet it augmented to a surprising degree the number of efficient soldiers who made their appearance round the eagles of the regiments. All these columns of march were directed to Dresden, where the Emperor received daily returns of the accessions of strength which his army was receiving, so that he knew the exact force on which he could rely. No sooner was this return made than the column of march was dissolved, and the conscripts of each regiment, under the direction of their own officers, took the route for the regimental headquarters. With such rapidity were the military formations and discipline thus acquired, that a regiment was reviewed by the Emperor, and made a respectable appearance, on the 20th July at Dresden, which had only been embodied in France on the 27th May.[1]

[1] Fain, ii. 52, 53. Odel. i. 209.

The concourse of so prodigious a number of soldiers at

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Dresden, as well as the continued residence of Napoleon, who, during the armistice, constantly had made it his headquarters, entirely altered the aspect of that charming city. If you cast your eyes on its palisaded trenches, on the girdle of redoubts which encircled its walls; on the host of pioneers who cut their way through its smiling gardens; on the formidable batteries which arose, as if by magic, around its environs, and the innumerable camps which covered its lovely hills, it was hardly possible to conceive whither the peaceful Saxon capital had fled. Nothing was to be seen on every side but long columns of troops, trains of artillery, and endless files of chariots; while the rich and varied uniforms of officers on horseback, riding to and fro, bespoke the incessant activity of the chief by whom the immense multitude was ruled and directed. But in the interior of the city, things still wore a pacific aspect. The multitude of French officers, indeed, and civil functionaries, who were there established, had given an entirely foreign air to the capital.[1]

31. Aspect of Dresden at this period.

[1] Odel. ii. 148, 149. Fain, ii. 57.

German signboards were generally displaced by French; Parisian costumes and articles of ornament were to be seen on every side; the theatres were filled with actors and actresses from the Théatre Français, or the Opera Comique. The hotel-keepers and sellers of military maps reaped a rich harvest; and, what was not less characteristic of French habits, the multitude of ladies of pleasure, who resorted thither from all quarters, was so great, and the gains they made so large, that, despite the well-known extravagance and improvidence of that class, their expenditure could not keep pace with their receipts, and numbers, in a few weeks, realised fortunes which rendered them independent for the rest of their lives.* Extravagance, profusion, and licentious-

32. Its Frenchified appearance.

* "Ce fut l'âge d'or des femmes livrées à la débauche. On en vit plusieurs s'enrichir au point de se constituer des rentes, ou de payer comptant en napoléons des maisons qu'elles achetaient."—*Témoin Oculaire,* 148; ODEL. ii. 148.

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ness, universally prevailed; and even the proverbial honesty of the Saxon character was fast giving way under the accumulated temptations which the presence of such prodigious bodies of foreign troops necessarily induced. But the progress of this moral gangrene was concealed under a still splendid exterior. The listless, indolent groups of officers who thronged the coffee-houses, lounged through the shops, or adorned the theatres; the multitudes of superb liveries which were to be seen in the streets; the splendid equipages which were driving in every direction; and the crowds of richly dressed functionaries, who every morning attended at the levees in the palace — bespoke the mighty monarch, still, from his central capital, giving the law to the half of Europe.[1]

[1] Fain, ii. 57, 58. Témoin Ocul. Odel. ii. 148, 149.

33. Disposition of Napoleon's force in Germany.

This vast force, which, by such extraordinary efforts, Napoleon had collected together, was disposed after the following manner. Twenty-five thousand Bavarians, stationed at Munich, observed the threatening masses of the Austrians, of equal strength, who were collecting in the neighbourhood of Lintz; twenty thousand conscripts, for the most part almost entirely inexperienced, were collected, under Augereau, at Würtzburg and Bamberg: Davoust occupied Hamburg, at the extreme left, with twenty-five thousand French, and fifteen thousand Danes: Oudinot, with eighty thousand, was stationed in front of Torgau, on the road to Berlin, to watch Bernadotte, who, with ninety thousand men, covered that capital; while two hundred and thirty thousand, divided into eleven corps, or forty-three divisions of infantry, and eighteen divisions, or four hundred and twenty-nine squadrons of cavalry, were under the immediate orders of the Emperor, and cantoned from Dresden to Liegnitz, with a corps, under St-Cyr, to observe the passes into the Bohemian mountains. This was independent of thirty-five thousand men, of various nations, who were assembled under Rapp at Dantzic,[2] and the garrisons on

[2] Jom. iv. 361, 362. Fain, ii. 226, 228.

the Elbe and Oder, in all eighty thousand combatants. But they were out of the sphere of operations, and could only be reckoned available inasmuch as they withdrew an equal force of the enemy from the field.

34. Deplorable condition of the garrisons in his rear.

The situation, meanwhile, of the garrisons, who were in a manner lost to France amidst the inundation of hostile nations by which they were surrounded, was such, that it was impossible to expect that they could much longer hold out for the Emperor's crown. The stores which Dantzic contained were immense; but such was the situation of its defenders, that they were hardly able to make any use of them. A hundred and twenty thousand stand of arms, twelve millions of francs in specie, and five-and-twenty millions' worth in grain and military clothing, constituted a prize to the conqueror, which it was alike impossible to abandon, and hopeless, in the end, to defend, from the condition of the garrison, notwithstanding its still formidable numbers. Five-and-thirty thousand men, composed of twenty-two different nations, had there taken refuge after the calamities of the Russian retreat; but they were not only in part mutilated by the severity of the cold, but almost all so attenuated in body and depressed in mind, from the unexampled horrors from which they had escaped, as to be incapable of any active exertion. They brought with them, moreover, in common with those who took refuge in Thorn, Wittenberg, Torgau, and all the fortresses which opened their gates to the fugitives of the Grand Army after the Moscow campaign, the seeds of a dreadful typhus fever, the invariable attendant on wide-spread suffering, whether from civil or military causes. This terrible malady, spreading with frightful rapidity, from the crowded quarters in which they were huddled together, and the total want of hospital stores, linen, or medicines for their use, soon cut off a large proportion of the soldiers assembled. Thorn had already succumbed, from these causes rather than from the artillery of Barclay de Tolly, who,

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April 17. with the Russian reserve, had been intrusted with its siege. It had been compelled to capitulate, with eighteen hundred men, before a practicable breach was made. Spandau, with a garrison of three thousand, and vast military stores, was surrendered on the same terms

April 24. on the 24th; and Czenstochau in Poland, with nine hundred men, on the 22d. Dantzic indeed still held out, and with the whole fortresses on the Oder, Stettin, Cüstrin, and Glogau, as well as Modlin on the Vistula, and Zamosc, yet hoisted the tricolor flag. But their garrisons, weakened by disease and misery, were long unable to undertake any offensive operation; and nothing but the continued blockade of the landwehr by which they were invested, was requisite to make the fifty thousand veterans they contained surrender eventually to the Allied arms.[1]

[1] Hard. xii. 113, 114. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 27, 28.

35. Preparations of the Allies during the armistice. July 12.

If Napoleon made good use of his time in reinforcing and strengthening his army during the interval afforded by the armistice, the Allies, on their part, were not idle; and such was the activity which they employed, and the enthusiastic spirit with which their people were animated, that they gained much more during that interval than their opponents. It is to this accession of strength, more perhaps than any other cause, that the extraordinary and decisive success, which they so soon afterwards obtained, is to be ascribed. The first care of the Allied sovereigns, after the conclusion of the armistice, was the arrangement of a general plan of operations for the conduct of the campaign; and in this important part of their duty, they displayed equal judgment and ability. The general principle laid down was, "that the Allied forces should always be directed in strength to the quarter where the principal forces of the enemy were assembled." As a consequence of this, the detached corps which were destined to act on the rear of the enemy, should always move as directly as possible upon his line of communications.[2] "The greater part of the Allied forces were to

[2] Lond. 372. St-Cyr, iv. 347.

be accumulated in the salient angle *of Bohemia*, which appeared eminently calculated to enable them to turn with facility in whatever direction their services were required."

36. Plan of the campaign agreed on at Trachenberg.

In pursuance of these plans, the following operations were agreed on. Part of the Allied forces, fifty thousand strong, was to be left in Silesia, to check the operations of the enemy in that quarter, but with orders not to hazard a battle. One hundred thousand Russians and Prussians were directed to move, some days before the expiration of the armistice, by the roads of Landshut and Glatz to Jung-Buntzlau, and Budin in Bohemia, to join as rapidly as possible the Austrian army, and augment the Allied force in that quarter to two hundred or two hundred and twenty thousand men. The army of the Prince-Royal of Sweden, leaving a corps of twenty thousand men to observe the French in Hamburg, was to assemble, in number about seventy thousand men, in the environs of Treuenbrietzen, before the expiration of the armistice, pass the Elbe between Torgau and Magdeburg, and thence move on Leipsic. The remainder of the Allied force in Silesia, estimated at fifty thousand men, was to approach the Elbe, taking care to avoid a general action, and strive to pass that river between Torgau and Dresden, so as to unite with the army of the Prince-Royal of Sweden, which by that means would be raised to one hundred and twenty thousand combatants.[1]

[1] See the Protocol in Lond. 372, and St-Cyr, Hist. Mil. iv. 347. Plotho, i. 386.

37. Disposal of the Austrian forces by this plan.

"In the event of circumstances rendering it indispensable to reinforce the Allied army in Bohemia, before the army in Silesia could effect its junction with that of the Prince-Royal of Sweden, then the army of Silesia was to march forthwith into Bohemia. The Austrian army, *united to the Allied forces*, shall debouch from Bohemia, either into Saxony, Silesia, or towards the Danube, as circumstances may require. Should the Emperor Napoleon, in order to anticipate the Allied army in Bohemia, move against it in the first instance,

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the army of the Prince-Royal shall endeavour, by forced marches, to throw itself upon his rear and communications. On the other hand, if the Emperor Napoleon should direct his attack against the army of the Prince-Royal, the grand Allied army is immediately to follow from Bohemia, to fall upon his communications, and give him battle. The general principle is, that the whole Allied armies shall, from the outset, assume the offensive; and the camp of the enemy shall be their place of rendezvous. The Russian army of reserve, under General Benningsen, shall forthwith advance from the Vistula, and move by Kalisch upon the Oder, in the direction of Glogau, in order to be at hand to act according to the same principles, and assist in the general attack upon the enemy if he remains in Silesia, or oppose his progress if he should attempt an incursion into Poland."[1]

[1] St-Cyr, iv. 348. Lond. 372.

38. Reflections on the admirable wisdom in which it was conceived.

Such was the memorable plan of operations drawn up at Trachenberg, signed by the Allied sovereigns and the Prince-Royal of Sweden, on the part of Russia, Prussia, and Sweden, and conditionally, in the event of her mediation failing, by Austria. History, perhaps, affords no previous example of operations so vast, diffused over so wide a circle, and carried on by armies drawn from such remote and apparently unconnected empires, being combined with such judgment, and executed with such ability and perseverance. They required for their direction a rare degree of unanimity and prudence on the part of all the principal commanders, and could not prove successful unless carried into effect with the utmost zeal and unanimity on the part of the officers and soldiers of all the different nations employed. Dangers of the most formidable kind awaited the combined armies, if any false step was committed; for they acted on the circumference of an immense circle, with a great river, wholly in the hands of the enemy, flowing through its centre; and in the middle lay Napoleon, resting on six fortresses, and at the head of three hundred and fifty thousand effective men.

At no earlier period of the war could it have been practicable to have combined the armies of three monarchies in concentric attacks against an enemy of such strength, possessing such a position, and led by such a commander. But times were now widely changed from what they had ever previously been. Experienced evil had allayed the jealousies of cabinets; universal suffering had roused the spirit of the people; repeated defeats had given wisdom to the generals who led them. Like Charles XII., Napoleon had taught his enemies how to beat him; and a disaster greater than Pultowa awaited him from the lessons which he had given them.

39. Determination of the cabinet of Vienna to join the Allies.

The determination of the cabinet of Vienna had been definitively taken at this period to join their forces to those of Russia and Prussia, if Napoleon refused the sweeping reductions in his empire which Metternich had proposed at the Dresden conference. It is proved by authentic state papers, that the motive which induced that astute diplomatist to propose the direct mediation of Austria in the end of June, and to urge the extension of the armistice till the 10th August, was to gain time for the landwehr and Hungarian insurrection to be brought up from the distant provinces of the monarchy, to make head against the immense forces which Napoleon had so unexpectedly brought into action on the Elbe.* Metternich now declared, "that the Emperor Francis's determination was to support the cause for which the Emperor Alexan-

* In a military report by Prince Schwartzenberg to the Emperor Francis, dated 28th June, it was stated as a reason for prolonging the armistice—"The Bohemian army would be not more than entirely complete on the 20th June. The vast and unexpected preparations of France render an increased armament on the part of Austria necessary. Every unappropriated regiment of the line, the landwehr, and Hungarian insurrection, must be called out and put into activity. Even if the difficulty of clothing and arming them is got over, it is impossible to bring them to Znaym and Presburg, from the south-eastern provinces, before the 14th August, and the other troops in proportion. Besides the troops raised in Bavaria, sixty-six thousand under the Viceroy have crossed the Tagliamento, and large reserves are collecting at Würtzburg and Fulda. As these measures menace Vienna, it is necessary to assemble a force at Klagenfurth, and near the capital, to counterbalance them. All this must be done without any detachments from the Bohemian army. Carriages cannot be got

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der had made such noble efforts." Agreeably to this determination, the Austrian government was a party to the operations agreed on at Trachenberg; and Bohemia was, with her approbation, made the great salient bastion from which the forces of the coalition were to issue forth against the enemy.[1]

[1] Schoell, x. 257. Lond. 368. Hard. xii. 134.

40. Austria signs the secret article of the treaty of Reichenbach. July 27.

And at length, when all hope of a pacific accommodation had vanished, and it had become evident that, with both parties, the renewal of hostilities was only a matter of prudence and time, the Emperor Francis permitted the signature of Austria to be affixed to the secret article of the treaty of Reichenbach, which had been expressly reserved for his sanction by Count Stadion, and in which it was stipulated, that "in the event of Austria taking a part in the war, she should receive £500,000 in bills upon London, and the like sum in military stores and equipments; that she should bring two hundred thousand men into the field, and be restored to the condition in which she was in 1803, or, at any rate, at the peace of Presburg, and that the Pope should be reinstated in his dominions." This clause had been drawn up under Stadion's eyes in the treaty between Russia, Prussia, and Great Britain, but without the direct authority of Austria, and the Emperor Francis long hesitated to sanction it; but at length, when all hope of peace had disappeared, he gave his consent on the 27th July, and thereby incorporated Austria with the Grand Alliance.[2]

[2] Hard. xii. 134. Heads of arrangement touching armistice and negotiations. Lond. 368. Appendix, No. iii. Schoell, x. 257.

to supply Russia with the provisions she requires from Bohemia; and as the extension of the French line on the Elbe may render it necessary that part of the Allied force should move into that province, it is most desirable that there should be sufficient time for supplying such a force, and that in the mean time the wants of the Allies should be supplied from Gallicia."—"Count Metternich's first and principal object in the negotiations at Dresden, in the end of June, was to urge the prolongation of the armistice till the 10th August, for the reasons stated in Prince Schwartzenberg's report. He was desirous also that Count Stadion should accompany the Emperor to Trachenberg, who was to be instructed to do his utmost to strengthen and decide the Prince-Royal to co-operate with the Allies. Count Metternich now declared that the Emperor Francis's determination was to support the cause for which the Emperor Alexander had made such noble efforts."—*Heads of the Arrangement touching the Armistice and Negotiations;* LONDONDERRY'S *War in Germany,* Appendix No. iii. p. 368.

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But although the accession of Austria to the league against France—though not yet announced to the world, and still veiled under the dubious guise of armed mediation—removed the greatest source of disquietude from the Allied sovereigns, yet they were not without serious uneasiness in another quarter. Bernadotte, indeed, had not hitherto failed in any of his engagements, and his interests were evidently bound up with the maintenance of the Russian power in the north of Europe, from which he was likely to derive such substantial advantages. But it was more than doubtful how he would act when the contest was removed to Germany, and when he was brought into conflict with his countrymen, his comrades, and his old commander. In truth, nothing could be more heterogeneous than the composition of his moral qualities, or strange than the political combinations in which he was at this time involved. A Frenchman by birth, he was now engaged in a war of life or death against France; a republican by principle, he was now deeply involved in a coalition of sovereigns against the child of the Revolution; a soldier of fortune under Napoleon, he now headed a powerful army against him; the heir to the throne of Sweden by election, he was now called on to shed the best blood of his people in a contest seemingly foreign to their immediate interests.[1]

41. Doubts regarding Bernadotte.

[1] Lond. 77, 78. Hard. xii. 181.

His character, able, indeed, and energetic, but vain, declamatory, and overbearing, afforded but little security against his conduct being influenced by some of the contending feelings arising out of so strange a combination; and yet the important position assigned him by the conferences of Trachenberg, and to which he was well entitled both by his military talents and political station, rendered it of the last importance that the Allies should be able to rely on his steady and sincere co-operation. When the military maps, indeed, were laid out before him, and the Prince-Royal had his scented white pocket-handkerchief in his hand, he descanted with equal animation and

42. Especially from the failings of his character.

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eloquence on the great military measures which were in contemplation; but, as was well observed at the time by one who knew him well,* "He clothed himself in a pelisse of war, but his under-garments were made of Swedish objects and peace." His zeal was always greatest in proportion as it appeared to be least necessary. A celebrated French actress, who had lately taken her departure from Stralsund for Vandamme's headquarters, gave rise to various surmises as to the Prince's secret communications with the French Emperor. His aversion to the Austrian alliance was openly expressed; he publicly aspired to the chief command in the armies of the confederacy; it was only by the most sedulous attention of the crowned heads at Trachenberg that he was rendered more tractable, and by the able and courteous efforts of Sir Charles Stewart, now Marquis of Londonderry, and General Pozzo di Borgo, who were attached on the part of the British and Russian governments to his headquarters, that he was retained during the campaign in a course in conformity with the great objects of the alliance.[1]

[1] Lond. 77, 79. Hard. xii. 181, 182.

43. Composition of his army.

But whatever his secret inclinations may have been, however, Bernadotte faithfully discharged his obligations with respect to the troops which he brought into the field. They amounted to twenty-four thousand infantry and four thousand cavalry—a very large force for a monarchy which did not at that period contain, after the loss of Finland, two millions and a half of inhabitants. Its composition, too, being drawn almost entirely from the rural population, where the want of labourers was strongly felt, while it rendered the troops more respectable, necessarily imposed upon the commander the duty of economising, as much as possible, blood so valuable to the nation. The leaders of this armament, Adlercrantz, Lowensheim, and others, were not only men of tried ability and valour, but ardently devoted to the cause of

* Lord Londonderry.

European independence ; and although the rustic air and uncombed locks of these Scandinavian warriors appeared to some disadvantage beside the Russian or Prussian Guards, yet they were robust, fully clothed, and well armed ; and they evinced, by their conduct in the campaign, that they had not degenerated in the elements of military spirit from their ancestors in the days of Gustavus Adolphus and Charles XII. In addition to this, Bernadotte had under his command twenty-five thousand Hanoverian levies, in part composed of the veterans who had combated in former days under the English standard, and who now, clothed and equipped by British liberality, and headed by the gallant Walmoden, had already attained a surprising degree of efficiency, and burned with anxiety to avenge their country's wrongs in the blood of the enemy. Thirty-five thousand Prussians, in great part landwehr, under Bulow and Tauenzein, in the highest state of enthusiastic excitement ; twelve thousand Russian veterans, under Woronzoff and Winzingerode ; and six thousand German troops, paid by England, but in the Russian service, formed, after all detachments to the rear were taken into account, an army of ninety thousand effective men in the north of Germany, independent of a detached corps of twenty thousand which watched Hamburg. And this force, although heterogeneous, and drawn together from many different nations, was animated in common by the best spirit, and effected most important achievements in the course of the campaign.[1]

[1] Hard. Etat des Forces Alliées. Lond. 379; and 74, 82.

44. Army of Silesia.

The most experienced and powerful of all the divisions of the Allied forces, however, was that which was still cantoned in Silesia, and which, being composed of the veterans who had survived the Moscow campaign, and the Prussians who had withstood the shock of France at Lützen and Bautzen, might be relied upon for any emergencies, how trying soever. During the armistice, this noble army was raised to no less than a hundred and sixty thousand men ; having been swelled to that amount,

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during the breathing-time afforded by that convention, by the incredible exertions of the Prussian government, the unbounded spirit of the Prussian people, and the great reinforcement, sixty thousand strong, which joined the Russian army after the fall of Thorn, and some lesser fortresses on the Vistula. This immense force was at this period cantoned between Schweidnitz and the Oder; but a few days before the commencement of hostilities, one half of it, including the whole Russian and Prussian Guards, in conformity with the plan laid down in the conferences of Trachenberg, moved into Bohemia, and joined the grand Austrian army there, leaving only eighty thousand under the command of the gallant Blucher, to maintain the war in Silesia. But this body, which embraced fifty thousand veteran Russians under Langeron, Sacken, and St Priest, and thirty thousand Prussians under Kleist, in the very highest state of discipline and equipment, and which possessed, besides, three hundred and fifty-six pieces of cannon, was animated with an invincible spirit; and its commanders exhibited that rare combination of military audacity with scientific calculation, which constitutes the mainspring of success in war.[1]

[1] Bout. Camp. de 1813, 3, 4, Lond. 379. Schoell, x. 270.

45. Early history of Blücher.

Blucher, the commander-in-chief of this noble army, was a veteran now far advanced in years, but retaining, under the gray hairs of age, the whole fire and impetuosity of youth. He was born at Rostock in Mecklenburg, on the 16th December 1742; so that in 1813 he was upwards of seventy years of age. Descended of an old and respectable family of landed proprietors, he first entered the army as cornet in a troop of hussars, in the service of the King of Sweden, in 1757. His education, during the troubles of the Seven Years' War, had been neglected, a want which he never afterwards entirely recovered; but his vigour of character soon made him distinguished, and threw him into a more honourable career than could be afforded with the then unwarlike troops of Scandinavia. Made prisoner in 1760, in a

skirmish, by the Prussian hussars, he immediately entered the service of the Great Frederick, and took an active part in the remaining years of that memorable contest, particularly at the battle of Cunersdorf, in 1761. The long period which followed the treaty of peace in 1763, threw the young lieutenant into the usual follies and vices of idle military life; and between the sports of the field, the gambling-house, or still worse places of dissipation, he had little leisure to improve himself in the military art. He was engaged in the contest with Poland in 1772; but his impetuous temper having led him into an unjustifiable act towards a Catholic priest, whom he had arrested and threatened with military execution, he was dismissed from the service by Frederick with these characteristic words, "Captain Blucher has got his congé, and may go to the devil!" [1]

[1] Biog. Univ. lviii. 375, 378.

46. First exploits in arms.

His career, however, was not destined to be thus terminated. He shortly afterwards married, and was engaged for fourteen years in agricultural pursuits, by which his fortune was greatly augmented. His passion for war, however, was not extinguished by this rural retirement. In 1786, he again entered the Prussian army in his old regiment of hussars; four years afterwards he was promoted to the rank of colonel, and in 1792 distinguished himself by his intrepidity during the invasion of Champagne by the Duke of Brunswick. In the campaign of 1794, he won additional distinction in the combat of Kaiserslautern. It was not till 1806, however, that he was called to a theatre worthy of his talents. He was engaged in the disastrous battle of Auerstadt; and although the cavalry which he commanded were overthrown during a charge in that battle, by the terrible artillery of the French, yet he amply redeemed his credit by the activity with which he gathered together the scattered remains of the army after the disaster, and the heroic courage with which he defended himself at the assault of Lübeck. Taken prisoner there, he was sent

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to Hamburg, where he consoled himself, amidst the humiliation of his country, by visions of its future resurrection and glory.[1] He afterwards was a member of the secret society of the Tugendbund, awaiting in silence the moment of deliverance. Called to the head of the army in 1813, he evinced the ardour of the sentiments with which he was inspired by the following proclamation to the Saxons:—"The God of armies has in the East of Europe pronounced a terrible sentence; and the angel of death has, by the sword, cold, and famine, cut off five hundred thousand of the strangers who, in the presumption of their prosperity, sought to subjugate it. We go where the finger of Providence directs us, to combat for the security of ancient thrones, for the present independence of nations, and to usher in the dawn of a brighter day."[2]

[1] *Ante*, ch. xliii. § 104.

[2] Schoell, iv. 336. Biog. Univ. lviii. 375, 382.

47. His character and appearance.

A true Goth by temperament and complexion, with light flowing hair scattered over his bald forehead, blue eyes, huge mustaches, and an aquiline countenance, he realised the image of those northern warriors who combated under Arminius with the legions of Rome, or under Witikind arrested on the Elbe the bloody torrent of Charlemagne's conquests. Originally a hussar officer, he always retained the ardent character which suits that branch of the military service: the habits then acquired never afterwards deserted him; and in the close of his career on the field of Ligny, when commander-in-chief of eighty thousand men, he headed a charge of dragoons against the French cuirassiers with as much alacrity as he would have done at twenty-five, and wellnigh perished in the shock. Impetuous and unruly in his desires, he was through life an ardent votary of pleasure; and the attractions of wine, women, and play, chiefly filled up, during intervals of rest, the passions of a mind to which, by nature and habit, violent excitement had become indispensable. But it was the necessity of strong sensation, not selfishness of disposition, which was the cause

of these irregularities; and though he indulged in them at times to the close of life, and might be seen at Paris, in 1814, rising from copious libations of champagne to seek the excitement of *rouge et noir*, he was yet ever ready to exchange these unworthy pursuits for the more honourable and yet stronger excitement of the field.[1]

[1] Personal observation.

48. And military qualities.

Vehement, irascible, and often imprudent, he was yet an ardent patriot. A true German in his heart, his whole soul was wound up in the welfare of the Fatherland; alone, of all his contemporaries, he distinctly predicted, amidst the disasters of 1806, the future deliverance of his country; deeply implicated in the Tugendbund, he waited only, during the succeeding years of bondage, the moment of retribution. When Frederick William at length raised the standard of independence, he was the first to draw his sword in its behalf. He could not be said to be a great general, though few commanders have achieved more important or glorious victories. The ardour of his disposition, and overflowing impetuosity of his courage, induced him, like Murat, to court danger wherever it was to be found, rather than avert disaster from wherever it threatened. He preferred seeking "the bubble reputation at the cannon's mouth," to waiting by patience and combination the tardier honours of the general. But he possessed, at the same time, the rapid glance, quick decision, and moral courage, which constitute such important elements in the character of a commander; like Suwaroff, he always struck home to the centre of the enemy's force, and never wasted his strength on their extremities. He was unrivalled in the tenacity with which he clung to his projects, and the vigour with which he repaired, in an incredibly short space of time, the most serious disasters. Many of the movements which he executed, particularly the passage of the Elbe, the battle of the Katzbach, and the cross march from Ligny to Waterloo, which, if he did not originate, he at least adopted, were not only characterised by military genius of the highest

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order, but produced the most decisive effect upon the issue of the war.

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49. General Gneisenau: his birth and early history.

What was wanting in prudence and circumspection for the ordinary duties of a general in the commander-in-chief, was amply compensated by the admirable talents and scientific acquirements of his chief of the staff, General GNEISENAU. This able man, though much younger than Blucher, was endowed with all the foresight, accuracy, and comprehensive views which are, in the long run, indispensable for the successful conduct of a great army. He was born at Schilda, near Torgau, on the 28th October 1760, so that he was nearly twenty years younger than his veteran commander, and was now fifty-three years of age. From his earliest years he evinced the strongest turn for military affairs; but his impetuous turn of mind, as is often the case in Germany, broke out at the university. He was obliged to leave the college of Erfurth on account of a duel with a tradesman, and soon after entered the Austrian service under Marshal Wurmser. But here he got involved in another duel, and was compelled to leave that service; and his father, on account of these repeated scrapes, having forbidden him his house, he became desperate, and joined the troops which the Margrave of Anspach, in 1780, sent out to America. These misfortunes cooled down his impetuous disposition; repentant letters from America reconciled him to his father; and in three years this second prodigal returned to his country and paternal home, where he soon entered the Prussian service as a captain of fusiliers.[1]

[1] Biog. Univ. Sup. lxv. 436.

50. His first services in Europe.

In 1793 and 1794 he was engaged with distinction in the Polish war; in 1796 he married, and from that time devoted himself, with the most intense ardour, to the study of the military art. In the war of 1806 he was engaged in the bloody skirmish, at the outset of the campaign, in which Prince Louis fell; and after the prostration of Prussia, maintained himself with the most heroic resolution in Colberg, till the peace of Tilsit found him

still unconquered within its walls. He then entered the civil service of government; but under pretence of discontent passed over to England, where he was engaged in secret political transactions, in which capacity he made frequent journeys in 1813 to Vienna, St Petersburg, and Stockholm. No sooner had the disasters of Moscow broken out, than he renewed his conferences with the English government, and immediately embarking for Germany, repaired to Breslau, where he was appointed quartermaster-general of Blucher's corps. He then laboured assiduously with Stein and Scharnhorst in the organisation of the Tugendbund, which spread so far the elements of resistance to France. It was under his direction that the retreat of the Prussians was conducted with so much skill from Lützen to Breslau; and so highly were his abilities now appreciated, that on the resumption of hostilities he was made chief of the staff to Blucher, in room of Scharnhorst, who had died of his wounds received at Lützen, which office he held till the final termination of the war by the battle of Waterloo.[1]

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[1] Biog. Univ. Sup. lxv. 436, 437.

51. His character as a general.

Thoroughly acquainted with the art of war, a perfect master of strategy, and invariably accurate in his estimate of distances and the march of troops, he infused a degree of correctness and precision into the movements of the army of Silesia, which enabled it to inflict the most terrible blows upon the enemy, without sustaining any serious losses itself. Europe was astonished at the admirable skill with which, during that whole campaign, the movements of this important army were conducted; yielding ground, where Napoleon pressed on them in person with superior forces; returning again to the offensive, the moment that the eagles of the Imperial Guard were seen receding in the distance; sacrificing on every occasion the lustre of separate achievements to the promotion of general objects; and constantly following out, amidst the intricacies of their own movements, the

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leading plan of operations agreed on by the Allied sovereigns. Without detracting from the great services of Marshal Blucher in that eventful contest, it may safely be affirmed, that the chief merit of it, at least so far as the general conduct of the campaign is concerned, as well as of the contest in France in 1814, and the guidance of the Prussian force in 1815, is due to General Gneisenau; and—what is very remarkable—in combating the modern Hannibal, the Marcellus of the Allies was found under the gray locks of the Prussian veteran, and the Fabius in the more youthful breast of his gifted lieutenant.

52. Striking concord which existed between him and Blucher.

No jealousy whatever marred the cordial co-operation of these illustrious chiefs—a sure sign, considering the delicate situation which the veteran held under the guidance of his comparatively youthful Mentor, that they were both great men. "When we wished to beat the French," said Blucher, "I rode out with Gneisenau: and we went to see how those carls (Kerls) were placed. Then I would say to him—'What would you think if we were to move in such and such a way?' and in less than an hour the orders were given." The destruction of the French army on the Katzbach, the passage of the Elbe, and the battle of Mockern, near Leipsic, were in great measure owing to his judicious counsels. He had a great part, also, in the bold advance towards Paris in 1814, which brought about the fall of Napoleon; and never was more rejoiced than when the Emperor's unlooked-for return stilled the discord among the Allies at the Congress of Vienna, and gave him another opportunity of striking a blow at the power of France. He directed the retreat at Ligny, after Blucher was disabled by the fall of his horse, and had a principal share in the decisive cross march on the 18th to Waterloo, which, with the valour of the English army, terminated the contest.[1]

[1] Biog. Univ. lxv. 437.

The grand Austrian army, under the command of Prince Schwartzenberg, cantoned in the neighbourhood of

Prague, consisted of a hundred and twenty thousand men, great part of whom were in an incomparable state of discipline and efficiency. It was divided into four corps, commanded by Count Coloredo, General Chastellar, and afterwards General Meerfeldt, General Giulay, and Count Klenau; while Prince Hesse-Homberg was at the head of the reserve, and General Bubna of the detached corps. Parts of this force, however—in particular, the infantry of Klenau's corps—were newly raised, and hardly as yet capable of withstanding the shock of Napoleon's legions; and though the artillerymen were scientific and expert, the horses for the guns and waggon-train were greatly inferior to those of the Russians, and little adequate to the fatigues of a protracted and active campaign. Very different, however, was the aspect of the cavalry. This force numbered twenty thousand admirable horse: the cuirassiers and hussars of the Guard, in particular, outshone any in Europe in the splendour of their appearance, the quality of their horses, and the brilliancy of their appointments; and their achievements on the field of Leipsic were worthy of their high renown and martial aspect. When the elite of this immense force was reviewed in the neighbourhood of Prague by the Emperor of Russia and King of Prussia in the middle of August, immediately after the resumption of hostilities, to the number of seventy-seven thousand infantry, and eight thousand horse, with three hundred and eighty pieces of cannon, it presented an array rarely paralleled in Europe, and formed a military spectacle of unrivalled sublimity. The cuirassiers on this interesting occasion were presented with new standards; and when the three sovereigns nailed, in unison, their colours to the poles in token of their firm alliance, it seemed as if no power on earth could resist a league of potentates, one only of whom could summon up so noble an array.[1]

53. The Austrian army at Prague.

Aug. 19.

[1] Lond. 106. Plotho, ii. App. No. iv. Fain, ii. 231.

Prince Schwartzenberg, who commanded the Austrian force, and afterwards obtained the general direction

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54. Prince Schwartzenberg: his character.

of the Allied armies, though far from being a general of the highest order, was nevertheless in many respects well qualified for the arduous duties with which he was intrusted. It was no easy matter, as he himself said, to command an army when kings and emperors were at headquarters; and probably there was no man in all the Imperial service who could have discharged that arduous and delicate duty so well as himself. Without possessing any great force of mind or decision of character, he was yet admirably fitted, by the suavity of his manners, the prudence of his disposition, and the amenity of his temper, to conciliate the potentates who were placed at its head, and allay the jealousies or keep together the often discordant powers of the alliance. Descended of a noble family; habituated from his youth to the very highest society; and personally known, both as a diplomatist and a commander, to most of the leading persons at the headquarters of the Allies; he possessed at the same time the prudent temper and conciliatory disposition which, in dealing with such exalted personages, were fitted to prevent any serious dissensions arising among them, and yet preserve, upon the whole, the even tenor of his own intentions.[1]

[1] Lond. 97. Fain, ii. 242.

55. His temporising character.

His combinations were judicious, often able and comprehensive, but he wanted the decision requisite for carrying them into execution; and more than once, particularly at Dresden in 1813, and in Champagne in 1814, when he had brought Napoleon, by his well-conceived measures, to the very brink of destruction, he failed in effecting his object by want of vigour, at the decisive moment, in carrying them into execution. For the bold measures which in the end hurled the French Emperor from the throne, we are indebted to the indomitable moral courage of Lord Castlereagh, and the noble decision of the Emperor Alexander. Schwartzenberg's measures were of a more temporising and prudent character; and he more than once seriously endangered the Allied cause by his ready recurrence to the favourite Austrian step of

a retreat. Yet justice must observe, that the powers even of the generalissimo of the Allied armies were far from being of an unlimited character. It is now known that during the war in France in 1814, the cabinet of Vienna was not merely far from being sincere in the cause, but was earnestly bent on separate measures. It was by no means desirous to hurl Napoleon from his throne, and involve the Empress Marie Louise in his fall; but rather wished to humble him sufficiently to induce him to submit to a regency, of which she might be the head, during the minority of his son, to whom the imperial crown might descend. In this way the Austrian counsellors hoped that the present liberation of Europe might be rendered consistent with the preservation of the French imperial crown in the family of the Cæsars. It was this policy which so often paralysed the Austrian forces during that campaign at the decisive moment, and threw on Schwartzenberg the reproach of timidity, when his measures were really owing to the secret separate views, very naturally in the circumstances entertained by his government. Add to this, the Aulic Council, now transported to the very theatre of action, exercised a secret and sometimes prejudicial control over its operations; diplomacy often interposed its obstructions, and asserted its supremacy in the most critical moments; and even when he was most unfettered, the power of individual direction was generally as much restricted as the responsibility of the generalissimo was increased, by the nature of a contest which had never less than two, sometimes three, of the greatest crowned heads in Europe at the military headquarters.[1]

[1] Fain, ii. 242. Sir R. Wilson, Power of Russia, 39. Lond. 97.

56. Resumé of the Allied forces in action on the Elbe.

The grand army of Bohemia, after eighty thousand of the Russians and Prussians had joined it, formed a mass of above two hundred and twenty thousand combatants, of whom forty thousand were admirable horse, with seven hundred pieces of cannon, which, from the salient bastion of Bohemia, threatened the rear and communications of the French Emperor on the Elbe. This, with eighty

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thousand pressing on him from Silesia, and ninety thousand from the north, composed a force of nearly four hundred thousand men, ready for instant operations in the field, all acting under one direction, in a concentric circle, upon one central point. The forces, therefore, at the outset of the campaign were very nearly balanced; and Napoleon's central position astride on the Elbe, at the head of three hundred and fifty thousand effective men, and with six fortresses on that river in his hands, might seem more than sufficient to counterbalance all the enthusiasm which animated the enemy's troops. But this was by no means the whole of the military array which the Allied sovereigns had at their disposal; and it was evident that, if the contest were protracted for any time, the forces of the coalition would acquire a decisive preponderance against him.[1]

[1] Plotho, App. No. 3, vol. ii. Schoell, x. 268. Hard. xii. 219, 220.

57. Reserves to which each party had to look.

The military force of France was exhausted; not two thousand troops remained even in the barracks of Paris—a force scarcely equal to the daily service of the metropolis; and the depots in the interior had sent off their last man.* On the other hand, vast reinforcements were preparing, and might ere long be expected within the Allied lines. Benningsen was organising a large army of seventy thousand Russians in the interior of Poland, which, it was calculated, would join the Allied forces on the Elbe in the first week of September—the last reserve, it is true, of the Muscovite empire, but one to which Napoleon had nothing additional on his side to oppose. Twenty thousand men watched the combined force of Danes and French conscripts which Davoust commanded at Hamburg; and the total amount of Russian and Prussian forces, which blockaded the fortresses that still held out for Napoleon on the Oder and the Vistula, amounted to the enormous number of one hundred thousand men.

* "Paris and the neighbouring departments had not at that period more than 2000 troops, veterans and gendarmes included."—*Recueil des Lettres Interceptées en* 1813, p. 13; and FAIN, ii. 356.

Thus the total Allied force accumulated in Poland and the north of Germany, was nearly six hundred thousand men; and although only two-thirds of this immense force, or four hundred thousand combatants, could be relied on for the shock of war on the Elbe, yet the remainder would in the end prove available, when the eighty thousand French veterans, who were now shut up in the fortresses on the Oder and Vistula, had yielded beneath the pangs of hunger, or the ravages of disease.[1]

[1] Plotho, ii. App. iii. Schoell, x. 268, 271. Hard. xii. 220.

58. Forces on both sides on the Bavarian and Italian frontiers.

Immense as were the forces which were thus arrayed against each other on the banks of the Elbe, they did not compose the whole of those which were drawn forth by the contending parties in this gigantic conflict. Five-and-twenty thousand Austrians, in addition, were assembled, under the Prince de Reuss, at Lintz on the Danube, to observe the motions of Wrede, who was at the head of twenty-six thousand Bavarians in the neighbourhood of Munich; while Hiller, with fifty thousand excellent troops, and one hundred and ninety-eight guns, was prepared to cross the Isonzo, and commence the conflict on the Italian plains with the Viceroy, who had arrayed sixty thousand cambatants to oppose him on the banks of the Tagliamento and the Adige. In addition to this, an army of reserve was forming between Vienna and Presburg, under the Grand-duke Ferdinand of Würtemberg, which was to be raised to sixty thousand men from the distant resources of Hungary and Transylvania, which had not yet arrived at the theatre of war; making a total of seven hundred and thirty thousand combatants who obeyed the orders of the conference of Trachenberg. If to this be added a hundred and twenty thousand men, who, at this period, were preparing, under the standards of Wellington, to cross the Pyrenees, where Soult, with eighty thousand, was intrenched to resist them, and forty-five thousand Allied troops in Catalonia, who pressed on an equal force under Marshal Suchet—the general result will be, that NINE HUNDRED THOUSAND men in arms

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encircled the French empire, which was still defended by SEVEN HUNDRED THOUSAND who followed the fortunes of the Revolution.* But if the central situation of the French is considered, and the advantages which they derived from unity of command and comparative homogeneity of race, as well as from the talents and reputation of their chief, it can hardly be said that Napoleon was overmatched in the field, save from the effects of the unbounded enthusiasm and exasperation which his own oppression had excited among his enemies.[1]

[1] Plotho, ii. App. iii. Hard. xii. 219, 220. Schoell, x. 270, 272. Jom. iv. 360, 361.

59. Cordial spirit of unanimity with which the Allied Powers were animated.

The whole of the Allied armies in Germany were animated by the highest spirit, and inspired with the most touching cordiality. The feeling of depression by which the Russians were animated when, in the outset of the campaign, they found themselves far advanced in Europe, and engaged in a fresh war, which seemed foreign to the real interests of their country, had given place to an universal and enthusiastic desire to share with their Prussian brethren in the deliverance of the Fatherland. Common dangers had awakened brotherly feelings; common injuries a joint desire of vengeance; valour on both sides, mutual respect. Those who had stood side by side on the fields of Lützen and Bautzen, felt confident against the world in arms. The universal animation with which the war was embraced by all classes in Germany, had excited a corresponding enthusiasm in the Russian warriors; the generous flame had spread to every breast; and such was the warlike spirit with which they were animated, that it was with no small difficulty, and only by the personal exertions of the Allied sovereigns, that they could be prevented from breaking into open hostilities on the expiration of the period originally assigned for the armistice. The Emperor Alexander and the King of

* See App. A, Chap. LXXIX, where the whole particulars of this immense force are given from the official states, published by the German author Plotho, and the nearest approximation that can be formed to those of the French, amidst the incessant efforts they have made to diminish their real numbers in a campaign so prolific in disasters to their arms.

Prussia set the example of this touching fraternity. Constantly living together on terms of the closest intimacy, they had not a thought nor a wish save in common; their suites formed one large family: and when they reviewed their respective troops, they always appeared in the uniform of each other's Guards, and with the military orders hanging on their breasts, which were shared by them with the humblest of their soldiers.[1]

[1] Lond. 75, 76. Capef. x. 159, 160.

60. Slow progress of the negotiations at Prague.

When preparations on so vast and unprecedented a scale had been made on both sides for the resumption of hostilities, it becomes of secondary importance to follow out the diplomatic evasions, trifling disputes, and studied procrastination, of the congress of Prague. Official intimation was sent to the French Emperor on the 11th July, by M. Metternich, that the Allied sovereigns had agreed to the prolongation of the armistice, and had sent their plenipotentiaries to that city—viz., M. d'Anstett on the part of Russia, and Baron von Humboldt* on that of Prussia,

* Charles William, Baron von Humboldt, was born at Berlin in 1767. Frederick Henry Alexander, his brother, the illustrious naturalist, came into the world two years later. The eldest commenced his education at the university of Jena, where he formed the acquaintance of Schiller, the immortal poet, with whom ever after, through life, he maintained an intimate correspondence. He united in his person the diplomatic and philosophic character; and in that double capacity was intrusted, in 1797, with a secret mission to Paris, the object of which was to report to the cabinet of Berlin the real state of France under the Directory. He next became the Prussian Resident at Rome; and after a residence of three years in the Eternal City, he was recalled to Berlin, where he was placed at the head of the Department of Public Instruction. It was at the very same time that his brother Alexander set out on the Travels, which his genius and learning have rendered so interesting, in the New World. Though at first inclined, as most men of deep and enlarged sympathies are in the outset of life, to liberal opinions, he had now become decidedly national and conservative in his politics; and as the subjection of Prussia to French influence had long been regarded by him with profound regret, it became necessary, when that subjection was changed into temporary servitude by the treaty of Tilsit, for him to retire for a season from public life. He withdrew, accordingly, to his country-seat of Tigel, in the neighbourhood of Berlin, where he was for some years entirely immersed, to appearance, in scientific and literary pursuits; and in these he acquired deserved distinction, especially by his Essays on the Tragic Muse. But during all this time his heart was in the cause of Germany; he was connected with the secret societies which prepared the minds of the people for its deliverance; and none looked forward more ardently for the appointed hour when the great conflict was to commence. It was from his known constancy to these views that in 1810,

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while Metternich himself represented Austria; and these high functionaries all arrived there on the 15th. Instead, however, of straightway complying with this intimation, and sending his own plenipotentiaries to commence business, Napoleon, when every hour was precious, commenced an altercation with the Prussian and Russian governments upon the choice they had made of representatives to the congress; objecting to M. d'Anstett that he was a French emigrant, and to M. de Humboldt that he was not of adequate rank to meet either with Count Narbonne or M. Caulaincourt. These objections came with a peculiarly bad grace from the head of a revolutionary dynasty: certainly Humboldt, brother to the illustrious naturalist, and of an old family, was on a level with M. Maret* or Caulaincourt,[1] neither

August 7. [1] Metternich to Maret, July 12, 1813. Fain, ii. 152. Anstett to Metternich, Aug. 7. 1813. Capef. x. 150. Bign. xii. 199.

after Austria, by her glorious efforts in the preceding year, had sufficiently demonstrated her sincerity in the cause, he was sent as Ambassador of Prussia to Vienna. His situation there, constantly watched as he was by the agents of Napoleon, was one of uncommon delicacy and difficulty; but he discharged its duties with equal judgment and address. When the war of Independence, in 1813, broke out in the north of Germany, he was of infinite use at the Imperial court in supporting the views of Prince Hardenberg, and overcoming the hesitation of the cabinet of Vienna, produced by the advantages of the French family alliance on the one hand, and the ardent feelings of German nationality in the empire on the other. His correspondence with Prince Hardenberg, at this period, is one of the most able and interesting portions of the records of European diplomacy. His diplomatic situation at Vienna led to his being appointed the chief diplomatist on the part of Prussia in the congress of Prague; he subsequently took part in the congress of Chatillon; signed, with Hardenberg, the treaty of Paris; and was actively employed in the congress of Vienna, when the difficult question relative to Saxony was mainly committed to his direction.—See CAPEFIGUE, *Diplomates Européens*, iii. 70, 83; *Biog. des Hommes Vivants*, iii. 432, 433.

* Hughes Bernard Maret, afterwards Duke of Bassano, was born at Dijon in 1763. His family belonged to the burgher class: his father was a medical practitioner of some repute in that city. He received a good education at its academy, and first acquired distinction in the competition for the prize for an Eloge of Vauban, given by the States of Burgundy, which Carnot obtained. Maret's Essay, however, had considerable merit, and procured for him an introduction to M. de Vergennes, then minister of state, who was about to introduce him into the diplomatic line, when the Revolution called him to other destinies.

From its commencement he was one of the short-hand writers who took down the speeches of the orators, and afterwards reduced them into the form in which they were published; and the immense collection entitled "Bulletins de l'Assemblée Nationale," was in great part the fruit of his labours. It is

of whom had any pretensions to descent: and they were, accordingly, after much angry correspondence, finally overruled, and the negotiations carried on with the existing diplomatists. Napoleon at this period was much irritated against Austria, to whose cabinet he not without reason imputed the reality of hostile feeling veiled under the guise of mediation; and in his instructions to Caulaincourt for the conduct of the negotiations, he revealed a desire to win over Russia if possible to a separate negotiation, to the prejudice of Austria.*

well known that many eminent men in England have begun their career in the same character of reporters. This avocation soon made young Maret, then twenty-six years of age, acquainted with Mirabeau, Clermont-Tonnerre, and the other popular orators in the Constituent Assembly. He was introduced by them to the club "Des Amis de la Constitution," and afterwards joined that of the Jacobins; but, finding their tumultuous debates little suited to his taste, he entered the career of diplomacy to which he had been destined by M. de Vergennes. There he soon rose to eminence. He was first sent as secretary of legation by the Girondist ministry to Hamburg, and then to Brussels, where he warmly entered into their projects of propagandism. He was the mouthpiece of Dumourier, and was by him despatched on a secret mission to London in 1792. When war broke out with England, he quitted London in February 1793, with M. de Chauvelin, and was soon after sent on various diplomatic missions in Italy, Switzerland, and the Illyrian provinces, which he executed with great address. He acted an important part under the Directory in the foreign office of Paris, and then found time to write a tragedy of very mediocre merit. In 1799 he was actively engaged in the intrigues which prepared the way for the accession of Napoleon to the consular throne; and, the moment the victorious general obtained it, he became the right-hand man of his diplomacy, which he continued to be till the empire was overturned. More even than Talleyrand, he was the organ of the Emperor's diplomatic labours, for he had an invaluable quality for government:—he had no ideas of his own. His original vocation of a short-hand writer never forsook him. He was an admirable expounder of the ideas of others. With equal readiness he developed the revolutionary projects of the Girondists, the imbecile intrigues of the Directory, and the despotic commands of Napoleon. There is scarcely a diplomatic act of the Emperor's, from the 18th Brumaire to the battle of Waterloo, with which the name of Maret is not associated. He was an honourable man, however, and, though entirely destitute of original ideas, had great talents for working out those of others. On Napoleon's fall he evinced a noble devotion by adhering to his ruined fortunes at Fontainebleau; and through life he was distinguished by kindness and disinterestedness of disposition, which were the more remarkable from the contrast they afforded to the selfishness and egotism with which he was surrounded.—See CAPEFIGUE, *Diplomates Européens*, 162–196; and *Biographie des Hommes Vivants*, iv. 334-336, (MARET.)

* "La médiation dont le rôle est essentiellement impartial ne peut rien vouloir pour lui. Il ne peut être question dans la négociation que des états dont le sort aurait éprouvé quelque changement depuis 1812. Plus tard, peut-

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61. Difficulties which arose respecting the form of the conference.

No sooner, however, was this difficulty in point of form surmounted, and Narbonne and Caulaincourt both arrived at Prague, where they were not installed till the 28th, sixteen days after the arrival of the Allied diplomatists, than a new and still more serious cause of dissension arose regarding the *form* in which the negotiations should be conducted. Metternich contended, that they should proceed after the manner of the congress of Tetschen in 1779; that is, that the negotiations should be conducted by means of written notes, addressed, not by the belligerent parties to each other, but by both to the mediating power, and by it transmitted to the plenipotentiary of the power for whom they were respectively intended. To this proposition the Allied diplomatists at once gave their consent; but the French strenuously contended for the course pursued at the congress of Utrecht, where both parties sent their notes directly to each other, and the communications were carried on, partly in writing, and partly verbally. It is evident that the former method was calculated to increase the importance and influence of the mediating power, by enabling it to keep in its hands the thread of the whole negotiations; and it is equally plain, that when parties are really in earnest, and time, as in this instance, presses, it is far more expedient to proceed at once to personal intercourse and verbal conferences, than to adopt the circuitous form of written communications addressed to a third party. Austria, therefore, by contending for the latter course, clearly evinced her desire to procrastinate. But it is equally plain, that if France had been sincere in the desire of an accommodation, she would have

être, y aura-t-il possibilité de rentrer dans son système avec l'Autriche; mais pour le moment, l'intention de l'Empereur est *de négocier avec la Russie* une paix *qui soit glorieuse pour cette puissance*, et qui fasse payer à l'Autriche, par la perte de son influence en Europe, le prix de la mauvaise foi et de la faute qu'elle a commise en violant l'alliance de 1812. La Russie a souffert, elle a droit à des avantages; l'Autriche n'a fait aucun sacrifice, elle n'a rien mérité."—*Instructions of* NAPOLEON *to* CAULAINCOURT, *July* 22, 1813. BIGNON, xii. 199.

preferred the commencement of negotiations in any conceivable method, to the prolongation of unmeaning discussions about their form. In this dispute about the mode of conducting the conferences, nearly the whole short remainder of the period assigned for the prolongation of the armistice was consumed; and the 10th August, the fatal period fixed for its termination, passed without either any commencement having been effected of a negotiation, or any proposal made for its longer continuance.[1]

[1] See Official Corresp. in Fain, ii. 200; and Capef. x. 155, 156.

62. Real views of the different powers at this period.

It is incorrect, however, to say that neither party in this armistice wished for a termination of hostilities. Both parties, in reality, desired it; but both were alike aware that the terms on which they were willing to come to an accommodation, were such as there was no prospect of attaining. Austria was not only willing, but anxious to mediate with efficacy, and bring about a general pacification; but then it was on condition that she obtained the Illyrian provinces and a share of Italy for herself, and the renunciation by France of the Confederation of the Rhine and the kingdom of Italy, for the cause of European independence. Russia and Prussia were ready to terminate hostilities; but that was only provided Prussia was restored and augmented, the kingdom of Poland dissolved, and the Hanse Towns restored to freedom. France was prepared to renounce some of her acquisitions, and sheath for a time, at least, the sword of conquest; but she could contemplate no greater abasement than the restitution of the Illyrian provinces to Austria, of her lost provinces to Prussia, and the dissolution of the grand-duchy of Warsaw, to soothe Russia. Napoleon still clung to the Rhenish Confederacy, the Swiss supremacy, the kingdom of Italy, the Peninsular and the Westphalian thrones, and the extension of the French frontier to include Holland and the Hanse Towns. In the event of hostile measures being resumed, Metternich foresaw it would be impossible to avoid being implicated

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in them; but he declared, and with perfect sincerity, to the French plenipotentiaries, that he did not know whom they should fight. Thus, though all parties were willing to negotiate, none were sufficiently lowered in their pretensions to render an understanding practicable: the victories of twenty years could not be obliterated by a single disaster, how great soever; and, as in the conferences between the Gauls and Romans of old, the sword required to be thrown in to restore the balance.[1]

[1] Capef. x. 153, 154. Fain, ii. 92, 93. Bignon, xii. 209.

63. Napoleon's journey to Mayence, to meet Marie Louise.

Napoleon himself gave the clearest sense of the hopelessness of all attempts at a pacification, by a step which at once dissolved all the expectations which had been entertained at Dresden of a speedy termination of hostilities. On the 26th July, three days before the French plenipotentiaries, Caulaincourt and Maret, had come to Prague, though a fortnight after those of the Allies had been in that city, and seven weeks after the commencement of the armistice, he set out from Dresden for Mayence, to inspect the fortifications in progress at that place, and to meet the Empress Marie Louise, who, by his directions, had come to meet him in that frontier city. He remained with her for six days, during which the most active military preparations were going forward, and everything announced the speedy resumption of hostilities. What the communications were which passed between him and the Empress-Regent during this momentous period, is now known by the best possible evidence, that of the Empress herself. "Associated," said she to the senate, "in that short interview, with the most secret thoughts of the Emperor, I then perceived with what sentiments he would be inspired if seated on a dishonoured throne, and under a crown without glory." In these words were truly revealed the most secret feelings of Napoleon. Seated on a revolutionary throne, and the head of a military republic, he was compelled to advance without intermission; unbroken success

was to him not merely essential to popularity, but the price of existence. He was much pressed at Mayence by the Empress and senate to make peace on any terms; but his answer, in three words, conveyed the whole secret of his policy during the remainder of his reign, "*Tout ou rien.*"* The Emperor spent six days at that place, inspecting the fortifications and reviewing the troops, which were incessantly urged on to swell the roll of Augereau's corps; and on the 3d August he returned to Dresden, where the increased vigour of his military preparations at all points, and the prodigious concourse of troops who incessantly poured into that capital, soon dispelled the hopes which had till then been entertained of a general peace. While Napoleon was at Mayence, Caulaincourt wrote to him in the strongest terms remonstrating against the instructions he had received, and urging him to abate of his pretensions and come to an accommodation; but, as usual with all advice addressed to that quarter, without effect.[1]†

[1] Fain, ii. 23, 24. Odel. i. 228, 231. Capef. x. 153, 154. Lond. 108, note. Bign. xii. 203.

64. Ultimatum of Austria to France.

The day after Napoleon returned from Mayence he wrote a confidential letter to the Emperor of Austria, as he had promised Marie Louise, a copy of which was communicated to Metternich, desiring to know, in a categorical manner, how the cabinet of Vienna proposed that peace should be arranged, and whether, in the event of hostilities, she would make common cause with France. This was what Austria desired; it was coming to the

* "All or nothing"—the very expression used by Sièyes as the watchword of the Revolution at its commencement.—See *Ante*, Chap. III. § 117, *note*. How identical was its spirit at bottom through all the different phases it assumed!

† "Quelle que soit ma répugnance pour des instructions si illusoires, je me pénètre avant tout de mes devoirs, et j'obéis. Mais permettez que les réflexions de votre serviteur trouvent ici leur place. L'Autriche est déjà trop compromise pour reculer, si la paix du Continent ne la rassure pas. Certes ce n'est pas la cause de cette puissance que j'ai à plaider près d'elle. Ce ne sont pas ses 150,000 bayonnettes que je veux écarter du champ de bataille, quoique cette considération mérite bien quelque attention. C'est *le soulèvement de l'Allemagne*, que le vieil ascendant de cette puissance peut amener, que je supplie votre Majesté d'éviter à tout prix."—CAULAINCOURT *to* MARET, *25th July* 1813. BIGNON, xii. 203, 204.

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point to which she wished to arrive, and accordingly it led to more substantial overtures. On the 6th, in the evening, a secret interview took place between Metternich and Caulaincourt; and the answer of the former to Napoleon's proposals was sent the day following from the Allied headquarters whither he had been recalled. The ultimatum was as follows:—"The dissolution of the grand-duchy of Warsaw, which was to be divided between Russia, Austria, and Prussia, reserving Dantzic for the latter power; the re-establishment of Hamburg and the Hanse Towns in their independence; the reinstatement of Prussia in its ancient possessions, with a frontier on the Elbe; the cession to Austria of all the Illyrian provinces, including Trieste." These were the cardinal points; but the Austrian diplomatist stated as minor questions, which would require to be adjusted in a general pacification, the independence of Holland, of Spain, and of the Pontifical States.[1]

[1] Fain, ii. 93, 94. Hard. xii. 205, 206. Bign. xii. 223, 228, 229.

65. Napoleon's answer, which declines these terms.

Caulaincourt entreated Napoleon, in the most earnest manner, to close with these proposals; and his letter deserves to be quoted, both as a remarkable instance of political foresight, and a noble example of political courage and patriotic spirit.* Napoleon spent the 9th in deliberating, and, on the same day, Caulaincourt again wrote to him, counselling, in the most earnest manner, the conclusion of peace on the terms proposed—but in vain. No answer

* "Le Duc de Vicence s'empresse d'adresser à Napoléon le compte rendu de sa conversation avec le ministre Autrichien. Sans doute, ajoute-t-il, votre Majesté verra dans cet ultimatum quelques sacrifices d'amour propre, mais la France n'en fera pas de réel. On n'en demande donc pas à votre véritable gloire. De grâce, Sire, mettez dans la balance de la paix toutes les chances de la guerre. Voyez l'irritation des esprits, l'état de l'Allemagne dès que l'Autriche se déclarera, la lassitude de la France, son noble dévouement, ses sacrifices après les désastres de la Russie. Ecoutez tous les voeux qu'on fait dans cette France pour la paix—ceux de vos fidèles serviteurs, qui, comme moi, doivent vous dire qu'il faut calmer la fièvre Européenne, dénouer cette coalition par la paix; et, quels que soient vos projets, attendre de l'avenir ce que les plus grands succès ne donneraient pas aujourd'hui. Après tant de temps perdu, les heures sont maintenant comptées. Trop de passions veulent la guerre, pour que la modération accorde le moindre délai à la paix."—CAULAINCOURT *to* NAPOLEON, *8th August* 1813. BIGNON, xii. 229, 230.

was returned on the 9th; but, on the 10th, the Emperor sent back an answer, consenting to the dissolution of the grand-duchy of Warsaw, but insisting that Dantzic should be a free city, its fortifications demolished, and the King of Saxony indemnified by the acquisition of the territories included in Saxony, belonging to Silesia and Bohemia, and all Prussia to the west of the Oder, including Stettin, Cüstrin, Glogau, and Breslau. He agreed to cede the Illyrian provinces to Austria, with Fiume, but refused to give up Trieste; the Confederation of the Rhine was to be extended to the Oder, and the integrity of the Danish dominions guaranteed. These terms were despatched in duplicate to Prague, where they arrived early on the morning of the 11th; but *after twelve o'clock on the preceding night, which was the termination of the armistice.* They were not such, however, as Austria could agree to; and the armistice having now expired, without any accommodation having been come to, the Russian and Prussian plenipotentiaries, at midnight on the 10th, addressed official intimations to Metternich, that their powers were at end, and the congress dissolved. On the 11th, the Austrian minister announced these communications to Caulaincourt and Narbonne, and on the day following Austria declared war against France. Metternich stated that it was the lapse of the 10th without any answer from Napoleon, which was the circumstance which now rendered an accommodation impossible. "With the exception of a few details," said he, "the conditions now offered would have led to peace yesterday. *Now*, nothing can be done, but by common accord. It is no longer a question of our separate interests. To-day we have a hundred and fifty thousand Russians amongst us. We are now only in a condition to ask what yesterday we might have exacted.[1]"

Aug. 10.

Aug. 11.

Aug. 12.

[1] Bign. xii. 233, 235, 237, 249.

The grounds stated in this official instrument, on the part of the cabinet of Vienna, for joining the Allies, and coming to a rupture with France, were as follows:—

66. Austrian manifesto.

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"The progress of events at the congress left no room for doubt that the French government was insincere in its professions of a desire for peace. The delay in the arrival of the French plenipotentiaries, under pretexts which the great objects to be discussed at the congress might have well have reduced to silence; the insufficiency of their instructions on points of form, which occasioned the loss of much precious time, when a few days only remained for the most important of all negotiations; all these circumstances combined, demonstrated too clearly that peace, such as Austria and the Allied sovereigns desired, was foreign to the views of France; that she accepted the form of a congress, in order to avoid the reproach of being the cause of the prolongation of war, but with a secret desire to elude its effects, or in the wish to separate Austria from the other powers already united with her in principle, before treaties had consecrated their union for the cause of peace and the happiness of the world. Austria comes out of this negotiation, the result of which has deceived her most cherished hopes, with the consciousness of the good faith which has animated her throughout. More zealous than ever for the noble end which she has proposed, she only takes up arms to attain it, in concert with the powers which are animated by the same sentiments. Ever disposed to aid in the establishment of an order of things which, by a wise division of power, may place the preservation of peace under the shield of an association of independent states, she will neglect no occasion for arriving at such a result; and the knowledge she has acquired of the courts now become her allies, gives her a certain assurance that they will sincerely co-operate for the attainment of so salutary an end."[1]

[1] Fain, ii. 212, 216.

67. Reply of France. Aug. 18.

To this it was replied on the part of the French Emperor:—"Ever since the month of February, the hostile dispositions of the cabinet of Vienna have been known to all Europe. Denmark, Saxony, Bavaria, Würtemberg,

have documents in their archives which prove that Austria, under pretence of the interest which she took in her allies, and of the love of peace, nourished a secret jealousy of France. The undersigned will not go over the system of protestations, so prodigally made on the one hand, and of insinuations covertly spread on the other, which the cabinet of Vienna has adopted, and which, when fully developed, has prostituted what has hitherto been reckoned most sacred among men—a mediation, a congress, and the words of peace. If Austria desire hostility, what need had she of a false language, or of enveloping France in the tissue of deceitful snares which met her on every side? If the mediator really wished for peace, would he have pretended that transactions so complicated could be adjusted in the space of fifteen or twenty days? Is it an indication of a pacific disposition to propose to dictate peace to France in less time than it would require to conclude the capitulation of a besieged town? The peace of Tetschen was only concluded after four months of negotiation. Six weeks were consumed at Sistowa before the conferences on the forms were concluded; the negotiations for the peace of Vienna lasted two months, although the greater part of the Austrian states was in the hands of France. Can it be seriously proposed to reconcile the differences, and adjust the interests of France, Austria, Russia, Prussia, Denmark, Saxony, and so many other states, watch in hand, in fifteen days? But for the fatal intervention of Austria, peace at this moment would have been concluded between Russia, France, and Prussia. Austria, the enemy of France, and covering her ambition under the mask of mediatorship, complicated everything, and rendered reconciliation impossible. But Austria, in an open and avowed state of hostility, is in a position at once more sincere and more simple; Europe is nearer peace; there is a complication the less. If Austria is really desirous of an accommodation, let her name a place which may be made neutral

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and set apart for a congress, where plenipotentiaries of all the powers, great and small, may assemble, and the negotiations may proceed with the gravity and deliberation suited to the magnitude of the interests at issue, without the continuance of hostilities." To this last proposal Metternich replied, that the proposal for a congress should forthwith be communicated by the three Allied powers to the other Allies; but before their answers could be received the struggle recommenced, and all thoughts of peace were drowned in the roar and whirl of war. Caulaincourt, however, was so desirous still to renew the negotiations, that on the 13th August he addressed a last and most pressing entreaty to Napoleon, to make peace on the Allies' terms; but it led to no result.[1]*

[1] Maret's declaration, Aug. 18, 1813, and Metternich's note, Aug. 21. Fain, ii. 217, 222. Aug. 21. Bign. xii. 249.

68. Reflections on this debate, and on the subsequent manifesto of Austria.

It may safely be affirmed that France had the better in this debate; and that, though both parties were insincere in their proposals for peace at that time, the reasons which Napoleon's diplomatists adduced for questioning the pacific intentions of the Cabinet of Vienna, were more weighty than those which Metternich advanced to substantiate a similar charge against them. But, as usual with state papers of this description, they were very far from revealing the real motives which actuated either party; and were put forward with hardly any other view, on either side, than to effect that grand object

* "Pesez dans ce moment, Sire, les intérêts véritables de la France, ceux de votre dynastie, enfin ceux d'une sage politique. Mettez-les dans les mêmes balances que ceux de la gloire avec ses chances, et votre Majesté fera la paix. Daignez vous convaincre, Sire, que cette coalition ne ressemble pas aux précédentes. L'Autriche, que je nomme encore, n'a pas préparé l'évacuation des archives de Vienne, et fait d'autres préparatifs, sans avoir prévu des revers. Dans cette lutte générale, la Russie ne court plus aucun risque: *elle combat chez les autres.* La Prusse est engagée pour elle, et malgré elle: il y va de sa vie. L'Angleterre se défend en Espagne; mais, au premier coup de canon, *elle commandera partout*; et votre *Majesté ne peut être partout.* Si les armées ont les moindres revers, si même les batailles sont comme les dernières, sans de grands résultats, qui peut prévoir les conséquences de cette réaction générale, et assigner un terme à la coalition? Confondez vos ennemis, Sire, déjouez leurs projets; faites la paix, ne fût-ce que pour faire passer l'orage. La France, le monde, vous la demande."—CAULAINCOURT *to* NAPOLEON, 13*th August* 1813. BIGNON, xii. 254, 246.

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of diplomacy, the concealment of the real thoughts of the parties. The true motives which actuated Austria at this momentous crisis are much more sincerely, and therefore powerfully, put forth in the Austrian manifesto, on the ground of war against France, drawn up by Gentz, which was shortly afterwards published by the cabinet of Vienna, and which will be found in the appendix to this chapter. Napoleon gave the most decisive proof that he felt he had been touched to the quick by this manifesto, by omitting in his publication of it in the Moniteur the most material passages which it contained.[1] And so reasonable were the terms of Austria's ultimatum, already given, that we have Lord Londonderry's authority for the fact, that in a private conversation between Caulaincourt and Metternich, the former admitted, that if he were Napoleon he would at once accept them, but that he had no power to do so, and that they must be referred to the Emperor.[2]

[1] Compare manifesto in Hard. xii. 211; and in Moniteur, Sept. 21. 1813.

[2] Lond. 97.

69. Early history of Prince Metternich.

Prince Metternich, who bore so distinguished a part in this memorable negotiation, and in whose hands the question of peace or war was in a manner definitively placed, was a statesman who, for above a quarter of a century, exercised so great an influence on the history of Europe, that any history might justly be regarded as defective which did not delineate the leading features of his character and biography. He was the son of a public functionary, of ancient and noble descent, who, at an early period of the revolutionary war, bore a distinguished part in the administration of the Flemish provinces. He was born in 1773, at his father's hereditary seat near Johannisberg, on the banks of the Rhine. Educated at Strasburg, he early improved his information regarding public affairs, by travels in Germany, Holland, and Great Britain; and soon after entered the diplomatic line, and served at the congress of Rastadt in 1799. His great abilities, however, soon attracted notice at a court which, justly impressed with the vast importance of talent in

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negotiation, never fails, despite its aristocratic prepossessions, to seek for it wherever it is to be found, even in the humblest ranks of the state. Accordingly, he was employed on missions of importance to St Petersburg in 1804, and Berlin in 1805. At both these capitals he sedulously studied, not only the national resources, but the temperament and habits of the people; and as his elegant and polished manners gave him easy access to the highest circles, he soon became personally acquainted with the most influential persons at the northern cabinets. After the peace of Presburg, in 1805, he was appointed ambassador at Paris; and in that delicate situation, though representing a vanquished monarch, he succeeded, at the early age of thirty-three, in conciliating all who came in contact with him, by the urbanity of his manners, and the admirable skill with which he maintained a difficult and yet important position.* In 1809, he was appointed chancellor of state upon the resignation of Count Stadion, under whose auspices he had risen to eminence, and whose known hostility to France rendered it necessary for him to retire upon the peace of Schönbrunn; and for more than thirty years from that period he exercised, almost without control, the highest authority in the Austrian dominions.[1]

[1] Hard. xii. 60, 61. Biog. Univ. Art. Metternich, Sup. lxxiv. 12, 16.

70. His character as a statesman.

No diplomatist, even in that age of intellectual giants, excelled, perhaps hardly any equalled Metternich, in the calm and sagacious survey which he took of existing events, in the prophetic skill with which he divined their probable tendency, and the admirable tact with which, without exciting unnecessary jealousy, he contrived to render them conducive to the interests of the country with whose direction he was intrusted. An easy and graceful address, a coolness which nothing could disturb,

* Napoleon at this time said to Metternich—"You are very young to represent so powerful a monarchy." "Your majesty," replied Metternich, "was not older at Austerlitz."—CAPEFIGUE, *Diplomates Européens*, Art. "Metternich."

an inexhaustible flow of brilliant conversation, a fascinating power of delicate flattery, at once rendered him the charm of the highest society wherever he went, and veiled powers of the first order, and a sagacity in discerning the probable tendency of events which never was surpassed. He had not the moral courage which rendered Lord Castlereagh superior to the storms of fortune, nor the heroic sense of duty which made Wellington indifferent to them, nor the ardent genius which enabled Napoleon to direct their fury. His talent, and there it was unrivalled, consisted in gaining possession of the current, and directing it to his own purposes.

71. Marvellous sagacity in observing the course of events.

*Laissez venir* was his ruling principle at all periods of his life; but this seeming *insouciance* was not the result of listlessness or indifference, but of a close observation of the course of events, a strong sense of the danger of directly opposing it, and a conscious power of ultimately obtaining its direction. He was well aware of the tide in the affairs of men which every age has so clearly evinced; and trusted, in combating the revolutionary torrent, chiefly to its speedy tendency, like all violent passions, to wear itself out. No man was more fixed in his opinions, or more convinced of the necessity of upholding those conservative principles, both in internal government and external relations, which the French Revolution had wellnigh subverted; but none, at the same time, saw more clearly the necessity of awaiting the proper time for action, or disguising formed determinations till the proper season for executing them had arrived. A perfect master of dissimulation, he was able to act for years in opposition to his real tenets, without letting his secret designs be perceived, or even suspected: and such was the power which he possessed of disguising his intentions, that down to the very last moment, in the congress of Prague, he succeeded in concealing them even from the penetrating eye of Napoleon.

Talents of this description might have been in the last

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72. His private honour and patriotic spirit.

degree dangerous in the hands of an ambitious and unprincipled man; but in Metternich's case they were restrained by influences of a higher description, which in a great measure secured their right direction. Though abundantly unscrupulous in diplomatic evasion in state affairs, and generally acting on the principle, that in public negotiations, as in love, oaths and protestations are the weapons which both parties may make use of at pleasure, he was yet of unsullied honour in private life; and whatever he said on the honour of a gentleman, might with confidence be relied on. Albeit long vested with almost unlimited power, and often placed in hostility with the aspiring spirit of Italian liberalism, he had nothing cruel or vindictive in his disposition: blood was hardly ever shed under his administration, and secondary punishment, though sometimes severe, was inflicted only so far as was deemed necessary to preserve the consistency of a despotic frame of government. Above all, his spirit was essentially patriotic; his ruses and subterfuges, and they were many, were all directed to the extrication of his country from difficulty, or the augmentation of its territory or resources; and, under his long administration, it was raised from the lowest point of depression to an unexampled height of felicity and glory. Admitting that much of this is to be ascribed to the reaction in Europe against French oppression, which was commencing when he was called to the helm of affairs, and soon produced a general effervescence which was irresistible, still much also must be attributed to the skilfulness of the pilot who weathered the storm—who yielded to it when its force was irresistible, and gained the mastery of its direction when the gales were setting in his own favour.

73. And principles of government.

"Everything for the people: nothing by them," which Napoleon described as the true secret of government,[1] was the principle by which his conduct was uniformly regulated in domestic administration. He had the strongest aversion to those changes which are forced on

[1] *Ante*, ch. lii. § 78, note.

government by the people, but clearly saw the propriety of disarming their leaders of the most dangerous weapons which they wielded, by a paternal system of domestic administration, and a sedulous attention to their material interests. The greatest possible personal freedom, and the least possible political power, were his maxims with regard to the people. He rigorously prohibited the importation of literary works having a democratic or infidel tendency, and exercised in this respect a vexatious and perhaps unnecessary strictness over travellers; the press at Vienna was subjected to the usual censorship of absolute governments; and public thought was confined within those channels which the Romish Church and Aulic Council deemed advisable. But, within these limits, no minister ever attended with more anxiety and success to the interests of the people. Under his direction public instruction has been rendered universal; the hereditary states have come to exhibit in their uniform wellbeing the beneficent effects of a paternal administration; and the Austrian monarchy, as a whole, exhibits, with a few exceptions, an example of general felicity, which may well put more popular governments to the blush for the vast capacities for exertion which they have misapplied, and the boundless means of general happiness which they have abused.[1]

[1] Personal observation. Capef. viii. 341, and Dip. Europ. 217.

74. His own account of his policy at this period.

The principles on which Metternich's policy was founded, from the time when he was raised to the supreme direction of affairs in 1809, till the rupture of the congress of Prague in 1813, were well described by himself to Sir Charles Stewart. He found the finances of the monarchy insolvent, its military strength weakened, its public spirit crushed by misfortune. His first care was to arrange and bring about the marriage of the archduchess Marie Louise, in order to raise his country one step from the abyss into which it had fallen: never intending, however, when the national existence and power were again

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secured, to make any permanent change on the policy of the state. This policy, for the three years which followed the peace of Schönbrunn, was attended with the happiest effects; insomuch that, when Austria was again called to appear on the theatre of Europe, she found herself speedily at the head of a force which rivalled that of the most prosperous days of the monarchy. His object throughout was to re-establish the influence and power of his country, and through it to give peace to the world; and on this principle he resolutely resisted all the entreaties with which he was beset, to join Austria to the alliance after the disasters of the Russian campaign, till the period had arrived when his preparations were complete, and matters had come to such a crisis, that she could interpose with decisive effect. But that his policy was essentially pacific, and that he had no desire to augment Austria, when restored to her suitable place in Europe, at the expense of less powerful states, is decisively proved by the fact, that ever since the peace of Vienna in 1815, and the fall of Napoleon, she has remained at rest, and no projects of ambition have either agitated her councils, or disturbed the repose of Europe, till she was involved in the terrible whirlwind which followed the French revolution of 1848.[1]

[1] Lond. 104, 105. See also Capefigue, viii. 174.

75. Early history of Count Stadion.

Though the first place is justly due to Metternich, as well for the important part which he took in this momentous negotiation, as on account of the subsequent and long-continued sway which he bore in the Austrian councils, yet it is hard to say whether equal merit in bringing about the final result is not to be assigned to his less fortunate predecessor, COUNT STADION. This eminent and consistent statesman was born at Mayence on the 18th June 1763. Descended from an ancient and noble family in Upper Rhaetia, which had for generations rendered important services to the imperial family, he was bred up at the university of Göttingen, and entered the

diplomatic line under the auspices of the veteran Kaunitz, then prime minister at Vienna. The discernment of that able statesman soon perceived the abilities of the young Stadion, and, at the early age of twenty-four, he was sent by him on a diplomatic mission of some importance to Stockholm. Subsequently he was warmly patronised by Thugut, with whose firm anti-revolutionary principles his own were entirely in unison. Thugut was in 1790 associated with Count Mercy d'Argenteau in the Austrian embassy at Paris. Stadion was by him recommended to Kaunitz to fill an important diplomatic mission to Berlin, the object of which was to bring the Prussian cabinet into alliance with the Austrian against revolutionary France, which he ably discharged. Soon afterwards he was sent to London, where he was deeply initiated into the policy and designs of Mr Pitt; but, perceiving that the principal direction of affairs was given to Mercy d'Argenteau, and being dissatisfied with the selfish and temporising policy which at that period characterised the cabinets both of Vienna and of Berlin, he ere long withdrew from public affairs, and retired to his estates in Swabia, where he lived some years in entire privacy.[1]

[1] Biog. des Hom. Viv. iv. 416; Cap. Dip. Eur. iv. 73, 87.

76. His career as a minister.

When more vigorous councils and generous feelings, however, came to animate the Austrian government, he was drawn from his retirement, and sent in 1805 to negotiate the alliance at St Petersburg, which M. de Metternich was endeavouring to effect at the same time at Berlin. After the peace of Presburg had terminated the Continental war, Stadion was made minister of foreign affairs at Vienna—a post which he held till the disastrous treaty of Vienna, after the battle of Wagram in 1809. Napoleon made it a condition of peace with Austria at this disastrous epoch, that Stadion should be removed from her councils, as he had stipulated for the retirement of Thugut from the same high office at the peace of Luneville in 1796. This fact speaks volumes as to the character

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and consistency of both statesmen. Napoleon never stipulated for the retirement from his enemies' councils of any but the able, and those whom he could not corrupt or overawe. He surrendered, accordingly, the portfolio of foreign affairs to Prince Metternich, and, withdrawing a second time to his estates, lived in retirement till 1813. The trumpet of Germany's deliverance, however, then roused him from his retreat; and after the battle of Lützen he was sent on a secret mission to the headquarters of the Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia, with whom he ere long succeeded in concluding the Grand Alliance which effected the deliverance of Europe. He subsequently took an active part in the negotiations at Frankfort, Chatillon, in the treaty of Paris, and the Congress of Vienna, and is thus to be regarded as a leading man in the glorious band by which the deliverance of Europe was effected.[1]

[1] Cap. Dep. Eur. iv. 87, 89. Biog. des Hom. Viv. iv. 410.

77. His character.

Stadion's character may be appreciated equally from the facts of his having been signalised for removal from office by Napoleon, and intrusted with the formation of the Grand Alliance by Metternich. Though a warm admirer of the genius and capacity of the French Emperor, he was no blind worshipper of his greatness; on the contrary, it rendered him only the more impressed with the necessity of every effort being made to stem the torrent of his victories. Alone with Burke and Pitt, he measured with prophetic eye the full extent of the danger threatened to the liberties of Europe by the French Revolution; and saw by what means it could alone be combated. He perceived that it would be vain to oppose it with the old arms of Europe: for the strife he buckled on new armour, specially prepared for the conflict in the furnace of Vulcan. It was in the Revolution that he sought the means of combating its excesses. The vast and universal armament of Austria in 1809; the appeal then made to the generous and the high-minded in every land; the raising of the landwehr and Hungarian insur-

rection, which brought Napoleon to the brink of ruin at Aspern, were owing to his counsels. The glorious alliance of 1813, which struck the great conqueror to the earth, was the work of his hands. He saw clearly that extraordinary circumstances required extraordinary remedies; that the days of methodical wars had passed; that the world of religion and duty must be roused against the world of passion and selfishness. His individual probity equalled his high principles and noble aspirations. It is mainly owing to his exertions that the finances of Austria, so deplorably shattered in 1813, have since recovered their stability; and during the ten years that he held the situation of minister of finance, there was neither a whisper against his disinterested rectitude, nor a check to the improvement and flourishing condition of the public exchequer.[1]

[1] Cap. Dip. Eur. iv. 92, 95.

78. Universal joy in the Allied army at the junction of Austria.

Unbounded was the joy diffused through the Russian and Prussian troops by the accession of Austria to the alliance. To outstrip the slow arrival by couriers of the long-wished-for intelligence, bonfires were prepared on the summits of the Bohemian mountains; and at midnight on the 10th their resplendent light told the breathless host in Silesia that two hundred thousand gallant allies were about to join their standard. The Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia, with their respective troops, were assembled in anxious expectation at Trachenberg, in a large barn, awaiting the preconcerted signal, when, a little after midnight on the night of the 10th, loud shouts on the outside announced that the flames were seen; and soon the sovereigns themselves, hastening to the door, beheld the blazing lights, prophetic of the fall of Napoleon, on the summits of the mountains. Such was the joy which pervaded the deeply agitated assembly, that they all embraced, many with tears of rapture. Spontaneous salvos of artillery, and *feux-de-joie* of musketry, resounded through the whole Russian and Prussian lines. Joy beamed in every countenance; confidence

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had taken possession of every heart. With lightsome steps the great body of the forces in Silesia obeyed next morning the order to march into Bohemia. Innumerable columns of infantry, cavalry, and artillery soon thronged the passes of the mountains; and before the six days' delay allowed for the commencement of hostilities, after the termination of the armistice, had expired, eighty thousand Russian and Prussian veterans were grouped round the walls of Prague.[1]

Aug. 16. [1] Capef. x. 175. Fain, ii. 95. Lond. 105, 106.

79. Arrival of the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia at Prague. Aug. 19.

The Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia arrived soon after in that city, where they were received with the utmost cordiality and magnificence by the Emperor of Austria; and a review of the principal forces of the latter on the 19th August—when ninety-one battalions of infantry, and fifty squadrons of cavalry, in all nearly ninety thousand men, defiled before their majesties—conveyed a vivid image of the vast accession of strength which their cause had received by this fortunate alliance. It was a gratifying spectacle to the English diplomatists—Lord Aberdeen, Lord Cathcart, and Sir Charles Stewart, who had so powerfully contributed to the bringing about of this felicitous union—to behold the persevering efforts of their country, after twenty years of constancy and warfare, at length crowned by the formation of a league which promised speedily to effect the deliverance of Europe; and their patriotic pride was not a little increased by the accounts which arrived next day of the defeat of Soult with immense loss, after a series of desperate battles in the Pyrenees, and the expulsion of his army, after a second irruption, from the whole Spanish territory.[2]

[2] Lond. 105, 106, 109. Fain, ii. 95, 96. Capef. x. 175, 176.

80. Last review of Napoleon at Dresden. Aug. 10.

It had long been fondly hoped at Dresden, that the 15th August, the day of the fete of Napoleon, on which, according to the custom of Catholic countries, his birthday was held, would be the day on which the signature of the preliminaries of peace would be celebrated. As the armistice drew near to its termination, however,

these hopes were gradually dispelled; and at length an imperial order, that the fete should take place on the 10th, clearly revealed the presentiment, that on the 15th the approaching resumption of hostilities would render such a display as was desired for the occasion impossible. A grand review, however, took place on the former day, with all the circumstance of military pomp, at which the King of Saxony, his brothers and nephews, and all the principal marshals and dignitaries of the empire, assisted. Napoleon, followed by this splendid cortège, passed the line, which was drawn up in the great plain of Ostra-Gehege, near Dresden, at the gallop; and afterwards the whole troops, who were collected at Dresden and its environs, defiled before him. The multitude of uniforms, costumes, and nations, which were then assembled, strongly bespoke the heart-stirring nature of the contest which had thus divided the world against itself in arms. The Old Guard, twenty thousand strong, of whom five thousand were splendid cavaliers, presented a magnificent spectacle; and it seemed as if nothing could withstand the hero who had such a force still at his disposal. A grand banquet followed, at which the whole soldiers of the Guard were entertained; and in the evening fireworks and illuminations recalled for a moment, amidst the gloom of its fall, the brilliancy of the triumphant days of the empire.[1]

[1] Fain, ii. 91.

81. Melancholy forebodings of Napoleon.

But though the splendour of these rejoicings for a while diverted the attention and distracted the fears of the soldiers and citizens, they afforded no respite to the cares and anxieties of their chief. Serious and thoughtful, he beheld the vast array defile before him, and immediately after the review terminated, shut himself up in his cabinet to resume the labours of diplomacy, which then wore so threatening an aspect. Melancholy forebodings filled every breast. It was universally believed that Austria had joined the alliance; no glowing order of the day, no heart-stirring proclamation, dispelled these fears, or called the troops to fresh victories; and next morning

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the rolling of the drums, which in every direction called the troops to their rallying points, the aides-de-camp hurrying to and fro, the clatter of artillery and waggons through the streets, and the long columns of bayonets and lances which defiled through the gates, told but too plainly that war was again about to rekindle its flames. This review deserves to be noticed; it was the LAST that Napoleon ever held of the grand army; disaster afterwards succeeded disaster too rapidly for the animating pageantry of military magnificence.[1]

[1] Fain, ii. 91, 92.

82. Interview of Napoleon with Fouché at Dresden.

Shortly before the recommencement of hostilities, Napoleon summoned to Dresden an old veteran of the Revolution and the empire, whose selfish ambition and capacity for intrigue were too dangerous to be allowed to remain in his rear, in the disgrace into which he had fallen. Fouché forthwith obeyed the summons, and on his way from Paris had an interview with Augereau at Mayence, who strongly expressed, with military energy, his conviction that the obstinacy of Napoleon would speedily prove his ruin.* The Emperor received him with cold civility: after the first compliments were over, they entered on the state of affairs; and the veteran revolutionist had the boldness to tell him that he was fearful that five hundred thousand soldiers, supported by an insurgent population in rear, would compel him to abandon Germany. Napoleon immediately resumed his warlike air. "It is distressing," said he, "that a general discouragement has seized even upon the bravest

* "I received," said Augereau to Fouché, "letters from headquarters immediately after the battle of Bautzen, and it appears that that horrible butchery led to no result; no prisoners, no cannon. In a country extremely intersected with enclosures, we have found the enemy prepared or intrenched at every point; we suffered severely at the subsequent combat of Reichenbach. Observe that, in that short campaign, one bullet has carried off Bessières on this side of the Elbe, and another, Duroc at Reichenbach. What a war! we shall all be destroyed. What would he do at Dresden? He will not make peace; you know him better than I do. He will get himself surrounded by 500,000 men. No one can doubt that Austria will follow the example of Prussia. If he continues obstinate, and is not killed, which he will not be, we shall all be destroyed."—See *Mémoires de* FOUCHÉ, ii. 171, 172.

minds. The question is no longer the abandonment of this or that province; our political supremacy, and with it our very existence, is at stake. If my physical power is great, my moral power is still greater: let us beware how we break the charm. Wherefore all these alarms? Let events take their course. Austria wishes to take advantage of my embarrassments to recover great possessions; but she will never consent to my total destruction, in order to surrender herself without a shield to the jaws of Russia. This is my policy; I expect that you are to serve me with all your power.

83. Whom he appoints governor of Illyria, to succeed Junot, who dies mad. July 29.

"I have named you Governor-general of Illyria; and it is you, in all probability, who will have to put the finishing hand to the negotiations with Austria. Set off; go by Prague; begin your well-known threads of secret negotiation, and thence travel by Gratz to Laybach. Lose no time, for poor Junot, whom you are to succeed, is decidedly mad. In my hands, Illyria is an advanced guard in the heart of Austria, a sentinel to keep the cabinet of Vienna right." Fouché made a profound obeisance, and straightway set out. He was well aware that he was sent into honourable banishment; but he was too prudent to remonstrate against his destination. Before he arrived in his province, Junot had displayed evident marks of insanity; the vexations consequent on the public reproaches addressed to him by the Emperor in Russia, joined to the rigours of its climate, and domestic embarrassments, had combined to destroy his understanding; and after Fouché's arrival he was sent back to France, where, in a fortnight after, he died in the house in which he had been born, having, in a paroxysm of madness, thrown himself from a window. Napoleon's early companions in arms were fast falling around him. Bessières, Duroc, and Junot, perished within a few months of each other;[1] the stars which shone forth in the firmament eighteen years before on the

[1] Fouché, 198, 215. Capef. x. 184, 185. D'Abrantes, xvi. 278, 321.

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84. Fouché's secret interviews with Metternich.

Italian plains, in the first years of the Revolution, were rapidly sinking into the shades of night.*

The astute chief of the police, in passing through Prague, however, immediately commenced his usual system of underhand intrigue and selfish foresight. He saw clearly that it was all over with Napoleon; and, deeming the opportunity favourable for commencing a negotiation which might give him the means of escape in the general ruin, he opened to Metternich in that city his ideas on the important part which the senate would come to play in the event of the Emperor's fall. "Europe," said he, "rising *en masse* against Napoleon, cannot fail to occasion his overthrow: we must look to the future. A regency, with the Empress at its head, and Austria as its support, seems to afford the fairest chance of success; the members of the Buonaparte family must be pensioned and sent to travel; a regency, composed of the leading men of all parties, including Talleyrand, Fouché, and M. de Montmorency, would soon arrange matters; the imperial generals might be easily appeased by great appointments, and France reduced to the limits of the Rhine." Metternich, without committing himself, received the plan proposed as a memorial, observing only "that all would depend on the chances of war."[1] But this project on the part of the veteran regicide and bloodstained revolutionist of

[1] Fouché, ii. 210, 212. Capef. x. 185, 186.

* Napoleon was deeply affected by the death of Junot. When he received the intelligence he exclaimed, "Voilà encore un de mes braves de moins! Junot! O mon Dieu!" Shortly before his death Junot wrote a letter to the Emperor, which, amidst much excitement arising from commencing insanity, contained expressions strongly descriptive of the feelings entertained by his early companions in arms at that period. "I, who loved you with the adoration of the savage for the sun—I, who live only in you—even I implore you to terminate this eternal war. Let us have peace. I would wish to repose my worn-out head, my pain-racked limbs, in my house, in the midst of my family, of my children, of my friends. I desire to enjoy that which I have purchased with what is more precious than all the treasures of the Indies—with my blood—the blood of an honourable man, of a good Frenchman. I ask tranquillity, purchased by twenty-two years of active service, and seventeen wounds, by which the blood has flowed, first for my country, then for your glory."—D'Abrantès, xvi, 323.

Nantes, deserves to be recorded as the first germ of the vast conspiracy which, in the end, precipitated Napoleon from the throne.

85. Arrival of Moreau in Europe.

While Napoleon was thus providing, in the honourable exile of his old minister of police, for the security of his empire during the chances of war, another illustrious chief of the Revolution was again reappearing on the theatre, destined shortly to close his brilliant career in the ranks of his enemies. MOREAU, ever since his trial and condemnation by the First Consul[1] in 1804, had lived in retirement in America, beholding the contest which still raged in Europe, as the shipwrecked mariner does the waves of the ocean from which he has just escaped. But the Emperor of Russia, who entertained the highest opinion of the republican general, deeming it not unlikely that he might be induced to lend the aid of his great military talents to support the cause of European freedom, had some time previously opened a correspondence with him at New York. Its result was an understanding between them. It was agreed, as the basis of his co-operation, "that France should be maintained in the limits which she had acquired under the republic; that she should be allowed to choose her own government by the intervention of the senate and political bodies; and that, as soon as the imperial tyranny was overturned, the interests of the country should become paramount to those of the imperial family." In pursuance of these principles, it was agreed that Moreau and Bernadotte should appear together on the banks of the Rhine, make an appeal to the exhausted army with the tricolor flag, and strive to overturn the tyranny which the 18th Brumaire had established. No sooner were these preliminaries agreed on, than Moreau embarked at New York, on board the American ship Hannibal, and, after a passage of thirty days, arrived at Goteborg on the 27th July, whence he immediately set out for Stralsund, to have an interview with Bernadotte.[2]

[1] *Ante*, ch. xxxviii. § 37.

[2] Capef. x. 169, 170. Lab. Chute de Napoléon, i. 294.

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86. His reception at Stralsund by Bernadotte.

Moreau's arrival on the shores of the Baltic was felt, as Marshal Essen, the Swedish commander, expressed it, "as a reinforcement of a hundred thousand men." He was received at Stralsund with the highest military honours by Bernadotte, who, amidst the thunders of artillery and the cheers of an immense concourse of spectators, conducted him to his headquarters. But though the meeting between the hero of Hohenlinden and the old republican of the Sambre and Meuse was extremely cordial, yet they experienced considerable embarrassment when they came to consult on the ulterior measures to be pursued in France, in the event of Napoleon being dethroned. Moreau, whose republican ideas had undergone no change by his residence in America, was clear for reverting to the constitution of 1792; and perhaps indulged the secret hope, that in such an event he might be called to an elevated place in the councils of the country. Bernadotte, whose democratic principles had been singularly modified by the experience he had had of the sweets of royalty, inclined to a monarchical constitution; and nursed the expectation that the choice of the French people, as well as of the Allied sovereigns, might fall on himself. But though the seeds of future and most serious discord might thus be perceived germinating in the very outset of their deliberations, common hatred of Napoleon kept them united in all objects of present policy; and after concerting, for three days, with perfect unanimity, the plan of military operations, Moreau set out for the Allied headquarters in Bohemia.[1]

[1] Lab. i. 294, 295. Capef. x. 170, 171.

87. His journey to, and reception at Prague.

Moreau's journey from Stralsund to Prague was a continued triumph. Such was the greatness of his reputation, and the enthusiasm excited in the north of Germany by his joining the Allied cause, that his progress resembled rather that of a beloved sovereign, than of a foreign, and at one period hostile, general. The innkeepers refused to accept anything from him for their entertainment; the postmasters hastened to offer him their best horses,

and sent on couriers to announce his approach; wherever he stopped, a crowd collected, eager to catch a glance of so renowned a warrior. At Berlin, not only the street in which he lodged was thronged with multitudes, but those even which opened into it; and during the few hours that he remained there, he was visited by the principal persons in that city. Nor was his reception at the Allied headquarters, where he arrived late at night on the 16th August, less flattering. Early next morning he was visited by the Emperor Alexander, who lavished upon him every possible attention; and he was immediately admitted into the entire confidence of the Allied sovereigns. "General Moreau," said Alexander, "I know your opinions: I will do nothing which can thwart them. France shall be allowed to pronounce itself — to show its power; I leave it perfectly free." His reception by the Emperor Francis was not less flattering, who publicly thanked the conqueror of Hohenlinden for the moderation he had displayed, and the discipline he had preserved, when in possession of a considerable part of his dominions. Moreau immediately began to study the maps for the campaign which was about to open; and it was very much by his advice that the grand attack on Dresden, which so soon ensued, and so nearly proved fatal to Napoleon, was adopted. On the 15th August, General Jomini, whose military writings have rendered him so celebrated, and who at that period occupied the situation of chief of the staff to Marshal Ney, chagrined at being refused the rank of general of division in the French army, to which his services entitled him, passed over to the Allies, and was most cordially received. Lecourbe was hourly expected; so that circumstances seemed to afford no small countenance to the favourite idea of Moreau, that it was possible to form a legion of thirty thousand men out of the French prisoners in Russia, who were reported to be ready to combat Napoleon;[1] and that this force would

Aug. 16.

Aug. 15.

[1] Jom. iv. 68, 369. Lab. i. 296, 297. Capef. x. 172, 173.

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form the nucleus of a host which, under his command, would divide with the Emperor the military forces of the French empire.

88. Contention about the appointment of a commander-in-chief to the Allies.

But, how gratifying soever the arrival of such distinguished French officers at the Allied headquarters might be, they led to a division on a point of vital importance, which, if not terminated by the magnanimous self-denial of the party principally concerned, might, at the very outset, have proved fatal to the whole alliance. That one generalissimo was indispensable to give unity to the operations of so many different armies, when combating such a commander as Napoleon, was sufficiently evident; but who that generalissimo was to be, was by no means equally apparent. This point was canvassed with the utmost anxiety at the Allied headquarters for some days before hostilities were resumed, and no small heat was evinced on both sides in the discussion. The Emperor Alexander openly and eagerly aspired to the supreme command, in which he was supported by the King of Prussia. His colossal power and great reputation, the unexampled sacrifices which he had made in combating the French Emperor, as well as the unparalleled successes with which his efforts had been crowned, his personal courage and tried energy of character, all conspired to give weight to his claim, which was strongly supported both by Moreau and Jomini. It seemed difficult, indeed, to conceive on what grounds it could be resisted; the more especially as the Archduke Charles, the only general in the Allied armies whose experience or exploits could render him a fit competitor for the situation, was kept at a distance by the unhappy dissensions which for some years had prevailed in the Imperial family of Austria.[1]

[1] Lond. 101, 102. Jom. iv. 375.

The command, in truth, would have been unanimously conferred upon the Emperor by the Allied powers, had it not been for the arrival of Moreau, and the high place immediately assigned him in the Russian military councils.

The Austrians, not unnaturally, felt apprehensive of being placed in some degree under the command of a French general, from whose hostility they had suffered so much; and it was soon painfully evident that, on this account, no cordial co-operation on their part could be hoped for, if the Emperor Alexander were invested with the supreme command. In these circumstances, that generous and noble prince, though not without a severe pang, relinquished his claim to that elevated situation; and, from deference to Austria, it was conferred on Prince Schwartzenberg, who remained generalissimo down to the capture of Paris. But though another was placed at the nominal head of affairs, it was impossible to deprive the Emperor Alexander of the weight which he possessed as the head of the largest and most experienced portion of the Allied forces. Indeed, such was the jealousy of the Russian soldiers at the idea of foreign interference, that Schwartzenberg's orders were for a considerable time privately sent to Barclay de Tolly, and by him transmitted, in his own name, to the corps of his army. It was often difficult to say, amidst the confusion of emperors, kings, and generals, at headquarters, who really held the supreme command. Every one was willing to share in the credit of successful measures, but none would admit the responsibility of reverses; and nothing but the common danger to which they were exposed, and the fervent spirit by which they were animated, prevented the alliance from falling to pieces, from the want of a real head, in the very outset of its operations.[1]

89. Reasons which led to its being conferred on Schwartzenberg.

[1] Lab. i. 297. Lond. 101, 102. Capef. x. 190, 191. Jom. iv. 375, 376.

Nor was it only by the Emperor Alexander that disinterested generosity was displayed. On the trying occasion of arranging the commands and distributing the corps of the multifarious host which was assembled round the Allied standards, princes, generals, diplomatists, officers, and soldiers, vied with each other in the alacrity with which they laid aside, not only national enmities, but individual rivalry, and bent all their energies, without a

90. Disinterested conduct of the Allied generals in regard to the command.

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thought of self, on forwarding the great objects of the confederacy. Alexander, discarding all thought of the supreme command, divided his force in nearly equal proportions between the three grand armies, and subjected them to the command of Schwartzenberg, who had invaded his dominions ; of Blucher, who had hitherto been unfortunate in war ; and of Bernadotte, who had taken so active a share in the first Polish campaign. Tauenzein and Bulow obeyed without a murmur the commands of the Prince-Royal of Sweden, whose sword had cut so deep into the vitals of Prussia after Jena, and at Lübeck ; Langeron and Sacken cheerfully acted under the command of the veteran Prussian Blucher, as yet unknown to successful fame : Russia, the main stay and soul of the alliance, whose triumphant arms had changed the face of Europe, had not the command of one of the great armies ; while Austria, the last to enter into the confederacy, and so recently in alliance with Napoleon, was intrusted with the general direction of the whole. On contrasting this remarkable unanimity and disinterestedness, with the woful dissensions which had paralysed the efforts and marred the fortunes of all former coalitions, or the grasping ambition and ceaseless jealousies which at that very time brought disaster upon Napoleon's lieutenants in Spain, we perceive that it is sometimes well for nations, as well as for individuals, to be in affliction ; that selfishness and corruption spring from the temptations of prosperity, as generosity and patriotism are nursed amidst the storms of adversity ; and that the mixed condition of good and evil is part of the system which the mercy of Providence has provided in this world against the consequences of the blended principles of virtue and wickedness which have descended to us from our first parents.

It is a singular, and to an Englishman a highly gratifying circumstance to observe, in how remarkable and marked a manner the achievements of Wellington and his gallant army in Spain operated at all the most

critical periods of the struggle, in animating the exertions, or terminating the irresolution of the other powers which co-operated in the contest. When Russia, in silence, was taking measures to withstand the dreadful irruption which she foresaw awaited her from the power of France, and hesitated whether even her resources were adequate to the encounter, she beheld, in the defence of the lines of Torres Vedras, at once an example and a proof of the efficacy of a wise defensive system. When the negotiations between her and France were approaching a crisis, in May 1812, she was encouraged by the fall of Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajoz to persevere in resistance; on the eve of the battle of Borodino, she made her lines resound with the thunder of artillery for the joyous intelligence of the victory of Salamanca; during the circular march to Taroutino, she received support amidst the flames of Moscow from the fall of Madrid. Nor did the glorious events of the Peninsula in 1813 occur less opportunely to exercise a decisive influence on the fortunes of Europe. The intelligence of the overthrow of Vitoria arrived just in time to determine the vacillation, and add the strength of Austria to the alliance; that of the defeat of Soult in the Pyrenees, to embolden the counsels and invigorate the arms of the Allied army on the resumption of hostilities, after the armistice of Pleswitz.

91. Great influence of Wellington's success on the Allied cause at various periods.

Whether these remarkable coincidences were the result of accidental occurrence, or formed part of the fixed design of Providence for the deliverance at the appointed season of an oppressed world, it is not given to mortal eye to discover. But this much may with confidence be asserted, that they afford a memorable example of the all-important truth, applicable alike to nations and individuals, that the only sure foundation for lasting success is to be found in the fearless discharge of duty: that human eye cannot scan, nor human foresight discover, the mysterious threads by which an overruling power works out ultimate reward for strenuous, or ultimate retribution for

92. Remarkable coincidences of events in the latter stages of the war.

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ignoble conduct: and that, whatever may be the horrors of the wilderness through which they pass, final salvation is decreed for that people, who, following the pillar of fire by night, and the pillar of cloud by day, resolutely persevere through every difficulty in the appointed path of virtue.

## CHAPTER LXXX.

### CAMPAIGN OF DRESDEN.

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Spirit of the French Revolution.

THE French Revolution was a revolt not so much against the government and institutions, as against the morality and faith of former times. It professed to offer new motives of action, new rewards of courage, new inducements to exertion, to emancipated man. The old restraints of precept, duty, religion, were to be abolished. The rule of action was to be, not what is right, but what is agreeable; not what duty enjoins, but what passion desires; not what is promised—ultimate reward in another world—but what is attended in this with immediate gratification. Sedulously fanning the passions, it invariably neglected the conscience; often using the language of virtue, it as uniformly directed the actions of vice. The incalculable power of the generous affections—the elevating influence of noble sentiments, were neither overlooked nor underrated by its leaders; on the contrary, they entered largely into their policy for the government of the world. They were considered as the appropriate, and often the most efficacious means of rousing mankind—as instruments never to be despised, but on the contrary carefully used for effecting the purposes of democratic elevation or selfish ambition. But it never for an instant entered into their contemplation, that these sentiments were to occasion any restraint upon their conduct; that the limitations which they so loudly proclaimed ought to be

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imposed on the power of others, should be affixed to their own; or that they should ever be called to forego present objects of ambition or gratification from an abstract sense of what is right, or a submissive obedience to the Divine commands. Hence its long-continued and astonishing success. While it readily attracted the active and enterprising by the brilliant prizes which it offered, and the agreeable relaxation from restraint which it held forth, it enlisted at the same time the unwary and unforeseeing even in the opposite ranks, by the generous sentiments which it breathed, and the perpetual appeals to noble feelings which it made. And thus, with almost superhuman address, it combined in its ranks the energy of the passions and the sacrifices of the affections, the selfishness of matured and far-seeing sin, and the generosity of deluded and inexperienced virtue.

2. Cause of the vast strength of the Revolutionary passions.

The vehement passions which the prospect of unrestrained indulgence, whether of pleasure, gain, or power, never fails to excite, the ardent desires which it awakens, the universal energy which it calls forth, are for a time irresistible. If experience and suffering were not at hand to correct these excesses, and restore the moral equilibrium of nature, it is hard to say how the career of iniquity could be stopped, save by a special interposition of avenging power, or the mutual destruction of the wicked by each other. All the passions of the Revolution, in its different stages, were the passions of sin; the strength it displayed was no other than the energy which, anterior even to human creation, had been arrayed against the rule of Omnipotence. The insatiable thirst for power which characterised its earlier stages; the unbounded desire for sensual gratification which succeeded its disappointment; the lust of rapine which sent its armies forth to regenerate, by plundering, all mankind; the passion for glory, which sacrificed the peace and blood of nations to the splendour or the power of one ruling people—were so many directions which, according to the

circumstances of different periods, the same ruling principle, the *thirst for illicit gratification*, successively took. The sober efforts of industry, the simple path of duty, the heroic self-denial of virtue, were insupportable to men thus violently excited. Nothing short of the spoils of the world could gratify passions excited by the prospect of all its indulgences. When Satan strove to tempt our Saviour, and reserved for the trial his strongest allurements, he led him up to an exceeding high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the earth, and offered to give him them all if he would fall down and worship him. Memorable words! indicating at once the continued agency of the great adversary of mankind on individual conduct, and the pre-eminent strength of the temptations to achieve his conquests which were to be drawn from the social or national passions.

3. Moral reaction which stops this unbridled career.

"Experience," says Dr Johnson, "is the great test of truth, and is perpetually contradicting the theories of men." It is by the ultimate consequences of their actions that the eternal distinction between virtue and vice is made apparent, and the reality of Divine superintendence brought home to the universal conviction of men. There is a limit to human wickedness; and duty, supported by religion, generally in the end proves victorious over passion resting on infidelity. It is the moral laws of nature, unceasingly operating, which provide for this reaction—wide as may be the deviations of human ambition or wickedness from the path prescribed by wisdom or rectitude, wider still is the provision made in the unavoidable consequences of their excesses for their final overthrow, and the condign punishment of their authors. The wisdom of Providence is incessantly warring against the errors, and its justice against the wickedness of man. More than two thousand years ago, the royal bard thus sang in words of inspired felicity, "Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches. Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and

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washed my hands in innocency. For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning. If I say, I will speak thus; behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children. When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me; until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end. Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction. How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors."[1]

[1] Psalm lxxiii. 12-19.

4. Extraordinary exemplification of it in the history of Napoleon.

Of whom were these words spoken? Of those in the days of David or of Napoleon? Twenty years of almost unbroken prosperity had reared up and consolidated the mighty fabric of the French empire, and no power on earth seemed capable of overthrowing it. Despite the catastrophe of the Moscow campaign, the genius of the Emperor had again brought victory to the tricolor standards. The triumphs of Lützen and Bautzen had steadied the wavering fidelity of his allies, and reanimated the spirit of his people: and four hundred thousand brave men were arrayed around his eagles on the Elbe, to assert and maintain the dominion of the world. Never, save on the Niemen, had Napoleon seen himself at the head of such a force; never had Europe beheld such a host assembled over its whole breadth, for the subjugation of its independence. But within two months from the resumption of hostilities, the colossal structure was overthrown; the French armies were swept as by a whirlwind from the German plains; Spain was rejoicing in her freedom: the liberated nations of Europe were returning thanks for their deliverance: and in six months more the empire of Napoleon was at an end; the mighty conqueror was cast away in mimic sovereignty on a petty island, and the glories of the Revolution were numbered among the things that have been!

The way in which this extraordinary retribution was brought about, now appears traced in colours of imperish-

able light. It was the same false and vicious principle, pushed to its necessary consequences, which produced the internal calamities and external disasters of the Revolution. By promising and affording unbounded gratification to the passions and desires, without any regard to the mode in which it was to be obtained, that great convulsion arrayed an astonishing force of energy and talent on its side; and if these indulgences could have been obtained without involving the ruin or destruction of others, it is hard to say where the career of selfish ambition would have stopped. But honest industry, laborious exertion, virtuous self-denial, alone can purchase innocuous enjoyments; all summary and short-hand modes of obtaining them without such efforts, necessarily involve the injury of others. Robbery and plunder, accordingly, veiled under the successive and specious names of liberty, patriotism, and glory, constituted from first to last its invariable method of action. It began with the spoliation of the church and the emigrant noblesse; the fundholders and capitalists were the next objects of attack; the blood of the people was then drained off in merciless streams; and when all domestic sources were exhausted, and the armies raised by these infernal methods, let loose to pillage and oppress all the adjoining states, had failed in extorting the requisite supplies, even the commons of the poor and the hospitals of the sick were at last confiscated under the imperial government.

5. Causes of this extraordinary change.

With those who were enriched by these iniquitous methods, indeed, this system was in the highest degree popular; but in all cases of robbery, there are two parties to be considered—the robber and the robbed. The long continuance and wide extent of this iniquity at length produced a universal spirit of exasperation; resistance was commenced by instinct, and persisted in from despair. From the ice of Kamschatka to the Pillars of Hercules; from the North Cape to the shores of Calabria—all nations were now convulsed in the effort to shake off the

6. Reaction against the Revolution from the misery it occasioned.

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tyranny of France. A crusade greater than had been collected either by the despotism of Asia in ancient, or the fervour of Europe in more modern times, was raised for the deliverance of mankind; and sixteen hundred thousand men on the two sides appeared in arms in Germany, Spain, and Italy, to decide the desperate conflict between the antagonist principles of Vice striving for liberation from all restraints, human and divine, and Religion enjoining the authority of duty and obedience to the commands of God. The world had never beheld such a contest: if we would seek a parallel to it, we must go back to those awful images of the strife of the heavenly powers darkly shadowed forth in Scripture, to which the genius of Milton has given poetic and terrestrial immortality.

7. First operations of the Allies.

Atlas, Plates 39,85.

The armistice was denounced on the 11th, but, by its conditions, six days more were to elapse before hostilities could be resumed. It was an object, however, for the Allies to be in perfect readiness for action the moment that the prescribed period arrived; and accordingly, on the 12th, the Russian and Prussian troops, in pursuance of the concerted plan of operations, began to defile in great strength by their left into Bohemia. The junction with the Austrian troops in the plains of Jung-Buntzlau, raised the Allied force in that province to two hundred and twenty thousand men. But though this host was in the highest degree formidable, from its numbers and the admirable quality of the troops of which the greater part of it was composed, yet a considerable part of the Austrians were new levies, as yet unused to war; and the variety of nations of which it was composed, as well as the want of any previous habit of co-operation, or uncontrolled direction in its head, rendered the success of any important operations undertaken in the outset of the campaign very doubtful. Hostilities were commenced by the Allies on the side of Silesia before the six days had expired. Taking advantage of some trifling

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infractions of the armistice by the French troops, the Allied generals, in a way very questionable in point of morality, on the 14th sent a corps to take possession of Breslau, which lay in the neutral territory between the two armies, and was likely immediately to fall into the enemy's hands on the resumption of hostilities. On the day following, Blucher advanced in great force across the neutral territory, and everywhere drove in the French videttes ; and their troops, surprised in their cantonments, hastened to fall back behind the Bober.[1]

August 14.

August 15.

[1] Bout. 5, 6. Jom. iv. 369, 370. Fain, ii. 237, 238.

No sooner was the Emperor informed of the resumption of hostilities on the Silesian frontier, than he set out from Dresden, and the first night slept at Görlitz. As he was stepping into his carriage, two persons from different quarters arrived ; Narbonne from Prague, with the account of the final rupture of the negotiations, and Murat from Naples, with the offer of his redoubtable sword. Napoleon had a conference of an hour in duration with the former, whom he despatched with the proposal for the continuance of negotiations during hostilities, which, as already mentioned, proved ineffectual ;[2] and then set out, with the King of Naples, in his carriage. Though well aware of the vacillation which Murat had evinced in command of the army in Poland, and of the advances which he had made towards negotiation with the Allied powers, the Emperor had the magnanimity, or the policy, to forgive it all : and he was again invested with the command of the cavalry, in which service he was, in truth, unrivalled. Uncertain on which side the principal attacks of the Allies were likely to be directed, and having himself no fixed plan of operations, Napoleon established his Guard and reserve cavalry at Görlitz and Zittau, watching the operations of his adversaries, and prepared to strike whenever they made a false movement, or afforded him an opportunity of falling upon them with advantage.[3] Fifty thousand men, in three columns, crossed the mountain frontier of Bohemia, and estab-

8. Napoleon enters Bohemia. Aug. 17.

[2] *Ante*, ch. lxxix. § 61.

[3] Fain, ii. 239, 240. Odel. i. 239, 241.

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lished themselves in the Austrian territories at Gabel, Rumburg, and Reichenberg; while the feeble Austrian detachments, which were stationed at that point under Count Neipperg, fell back, still skilfully screening their rear, on the road to Prague.[1]

9. He turns aside into Silesia, notwithstanding all St-Cyr's efforts.

Napoleon's movements at this time were based upon the idea, to which he obstinately adhered till it had well-nigh proved his ruin, that the great effort of the Allies would be made on the side of Silesia, and that it was there that the first decisive strokes of the campaign were to be delivered. He persevered in this belief, even after he had become acquainted, by his irruption into Bohemia, with the march of the grand Russian and Prussian army into that province, and their concentration under the immediate eye of the Allied sovereigns round the walls of Prague. All the efforts of Marshal St-Cyr to convince him that this was the quarter from which danger was to be apprehended; that so great an accumulation of force in Bohemia would not have been made without some serious design; and that the French would soon find their quarters straitened in the neighbourhood of Torgau and Dresden, were in vain.* Deaf to these arguments, and uninfluenced even by the obvious confirmation which they received from the march of the Russians and Prussians in such force into Bohemia, Napoleon persisted in believing that it was on the Bober and the Katzbach,

* "The movement which your majesty has commenced into Bohemia, upon Gabel, and which you appear to design to push still further on, appears to me one of those happy inspirations of which your genius is so fruitful. The re-union of the three sovereigns at Prague, of the Austrian army, and a considerable part of the Russian and Prussian, do not leave a doubt of the intentions of the enemy. They have always desired to operate on that side; they desire it still, notwithstanding the movements of your majesty. So great an army is not assembled without a purpose: their object is to execute a change of front along their whole line, the left in front moving upon Wittenberg; and to straiten Dresden and Torgau so much by intrenching themselves around them, even if they should not succeed in taking these fortresses, as to render all egress almost impossible, while, with their right, they make head against your majesty on the Elbe."—St-Cyr *to* Napoleon, *August* 21, 1813. St-Cyr, *Histoire Militaire*, iv. 372; *Pièces Just.*

now comparatively stripped of troops, that he should commence operations; and assuring St-Cyr, who was left at Pirna with thirty thousand men, in command of the passes leading from Bohemia to Dresden, that he had nothing to fear; that Vandamme would come to his assistance if the enemy threatened him in considerable force; and that, if necessary, he himself would return with his Guard, and assemble a hundred and sixty thousand men round the walls of that city;—he ordered the whole troops under his immediate command to wheel to the left, and defile towards Silesia.[1]*

Aug. 20. [1] Odel. i. 241, 242. St-Cyr to Napoleon, 20th Aug. 1813. Napoleon to St-Cyr, Aug. 20, 1813. St-Cyr, iv. 367, 372.

Meanwhile Blucher was vigorously pressing on the French army in Silesia, which, not being in sufficient strength to resist his formidable masses, was everywhere falling back before him. Lauriston was pushed by the Russians under Langeron; Ney, by the corps of Sacken; Marmont and Macdonald, by the Prussians under Blucher and York. Such was the vigour of the pursuit, that ground was rapidly lost by the French in every direction. Ney fell back on the night of the 17th from Liegnitz to Haynau; next day the Katzbach was passed at all points; on the 18th, Blucher established his headquarters at Goldberg, while Sacken occupied Liegnitz. Still the Allies pressed on: Langeron on the left passed the Bober at Zobten, after routing a detachment which occupied that point; in the centre, Blucher, with his brave Prus-

10. Retreat of Macdonald in Silesia.

Aug. 17.

Aug. 18.

* "Should the Russian and Austrian forces united march upon Dresden by the left bank, General Vandamme will come to its relief; you will then have under your orders 60,000 men in the camp of Dresden on the two banks. The troops in the camp of Zittau, become disposable in that event, will also hasten there; they will arrive in four days, and raise your force to 100,000. I will come with my Guard, 50,000 strong; and in four days we shall have from 160,000 to 180,000 men round its walls. It is of no consequence though they cut me off from France: the essential point is, that I should not be cut off from Dresden and the Elbe. The army of Silesia, which is from 130,000 to 140,000 men, without the Guard, may be reinforced by that corps d'élite, and raised to 180,000. They will debouch against Wittgenstein, Blucher, and Sacken, who, at this moment, are marching against our troops at Buntzlau: as soon as I have destroyed or disabled them, I will be in a situation to restore the equilibrium by marching upon Berlin, or taking the Austrians in rear in

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sians, obliged Lauriston also to recross it; while Ney, in like manner, was compelled to evacuate Buntzlau, and fall back across the same stream. Thus, at all points, the French force in Silesia was giving way before the enemy; and it was of sinister augury that the gallant generals at its head did not feel themselves strong enough to withstand his advance: for it was an army which Napoleon estimated at a hundred thousand men, which was thus receding without striking a blow.[1]*

[1] Bout. viii. 10. Fain, ii. 243, 244. Jom. iv. 370.

11. Napoleon's advance against Blucher, who falls back.

But the arrival of the heads of the columns of Guards and cavalry, commanded by Napoleon in person, which were directed with all possible expedition to the left, through the Bohemian mountains towards Buntzlau, soon changed the state of affairs in this quarter. No sooner did they appear, than the retreat of Ney's army was stopped, and the soldiers with joy received orders to wheel about and march against the enemy. The indefatigable activity of the Emperor communicated itself to the troops: all vied with each other in pressing forward to what it was hoped would prove a decisive victory; and infantry, cavalry, and artillery, with the Imperial Guard at their head, poured in an impetuous, yet regulated torrent, down the valleys of the Bohemian mountains, and inundated the Silesian plains. Such was Napoleon's anxiety to press forward, that he outstripped even the cavalry of the Guard, and arrived at Lauban, in advance of Görlitz, with hardly any of his attendants around him. By daybreak on the following morning he

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Aug. 21.

Bohemia. All that is not as yet clear: but one thing is sufficiently clear, that you cannot turn 400,000 men, posted under cover of a chain of fortified places, and who can debouch at pleasure by Dresden, Torgau, Wittenberg, or Magdeburg. All you have to do is, to dispute the ground, gain time, and preserve Dresden, and to maintain active and constant communications with General Vandamme."—NAPOLEON *to* ST-CYR, 17*th August* 1813. ST-CYR, iv. 365; *Pièces Just.*

* "MY COUSIN,—Inform the Duke of Tarentum, (Macdonald,) that I have put under his orders the army of the Bober, which is composed of one hundred thousand men, infantry, cavalry, artillery, and engineers included."—NAPOLEON'S *Instructions to* BERTHIER *for* MACDONALD, 23*d August* 1813. ST-CYR, iv. 374; *Pièces Just.*

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was on the banks of the Bober, and entered Löwenberg with the advanced guards. The bridge, which the Prussians had broken down, was restored under the cover of artillery; Lauriston, in face of the enemy, recrossed the river, and advanced, with a constant running fire in front, to the gates of Goldberg. Blucher continuing his retreat on the following day, the Katzbach also was passed, and the whole army of Silesia concentrated around Jauer. But the retreat of the Allies, though decidedly pronounced, was far from being a flight. With admirable skill they took advantage of every favourable position to check the pursuit, and give time to the columns in rear to retire in order; and in several severe actions, especially one in front of Goldberg, inflicted a very severe loss upon the enemy. Such was the magnitude of the forces employed on both sides, and the extent of ground over which hostilities were carried on, that although they had only lasted five days, and no general engagement had taken place, each party was already weakened by fully six thousand men. Napoleon evinced the greatest satisfaction at the result of this day's operations, and at thus seeing so great a mass of the enemy's forces retreating before him in the very outset of the campaign. But cooler observers in the French army remarked, that the plan of the Allies was sagaciously designed and skilfully executed, when they had thus early succeeded in attracting Napoleon to whichever side they chose, and yet avoided the risk of an encounter when the chances were no longer in their favour.[1]

Aug. 21.

[1] Odel. i. 241, 244. Bout. 10, 11. Fain, ii. 244, 245. Lab. i. 301, 302.

12. Advance of the Allies upon Dresden.

In truth, Blucher's advance and subsequent retreat were part of the general policy of the Allies for the conduct of the campaign laid down at Trachenberg, and developed with remarkable precision in his instructions;*

* "Should the enemy evince an intention to make an irruption into Bohemia, or to attack the army of the Prince-Royal of Sweden, the army of Silesia will endeavour to impede his operations as much as possible, always taking care not to engage superior forces. In order to arrive at that object, it will be necessary to harass the enemy with the advanced guard and light troops, and observe him narrowly, in order to prevent him from stealing a march,

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and Napoleon, in consequence of it, and from the bold measures adopted in his rear, was brought to within a hair's-breadth of destruction. Following out the decided but yet judicious counsels of Bernadotte, Moreau, and Jomini, the Allied sovereigns had taken the resolution of descending, with their whole disposable force, from Bohemia upon Saxony and Dresden, and thus striking at the enemy's communications, and the heart of his power, at the very time when the Emperor himself, with the flower of his army, was far advanced in Silesia in pursuit

Aug. 21.

of the retiring columns of Blucher. At the time when Napoleon was driving the last corps of the army of Silesia across the Bober, the grand army of the Allies, two hundred thousand strong, broke up from their cantonments in Bohemia, and began to cross the Erzgebirge mountains. All the passes into Saxony were soon crowded with the innumerable host, which threatened soon to cut off the whole communications of the Emperor with France, and render untenable the position which he had studied and fortified with so much care on the Elbe. It had been at first resolved to move in force upon Leipsic, in order to cut off Napoleon's communications with France; but this was abandoned as endangering too much their own line of retreat and supplies.[1]

[1] St-Cyr, iv. 78, 79. Bout. 24, 25. Fain, ii. 252. Bign. xii. 276.

13. Forces of St-Cyr and Vandamme to oppose this invasion.

To oppose this formidable invasion there was no force immediately available but that of St-Cyr, stationed at Pirna, which numbered only twenty-two thousand men present with the eagles on the frontier, though its nominal amount was thirty thousand. Vandamme's corps, of greater strength, and Poniatowski's Poles, were

unperceived, into Saxony; but still every engagement with the enemy in superior force must be avoided. Should the enemy, on the other hand, direct his principal forces against the army of Silesia, it will endeavour to arrest him as long as possible; and, having done so, direct its retreat upon the Neisse, taking especial care not to compromise its safety. In that event, the corps of General Sacken will extend itself along the Oder, and take measures, by means of a corps of light cavalry, to keep up the communication with the army of reserve in Poland. The light corps at Landshut will also, in that event, keep up the communication with the army of Bohemia; the fortresses of Silesia must be

within a few days' march, at the entrance of the passes towards Zittau and Gabel, leading into Silesia; but they could not be relied on to co-operate in warding off any sudden attack on the capital. Meanwhile, the danger was instant and pressing. The Allied army rapidly advanced; and, on the 21st, Barclay de Tolly and Wittgenstein presented themselves in great strength before the barriers, on the heights of Peterswalde, which they speedily forced, and laid open the great road from Prague to Dresden. The Prussians, under Kleist, farther to the left, descended from the mountains upon Gottleube and Dohna; while the great masses of the Austrians, with the Imperial headquarters, moved by the roads of Altenberg and Saida on Dippoldiswalde; and on the extreme left, Colloredo, Chastellar, Giulay, and Klenau poured down from the Marienberg hills, and, directing their advance upon Freyberg, threatened entirely to intercept the communication between Dresden and the Rhine.[1]

Aug. 22.

[1] St-Cyr, iv. 78, 80. Fain, ii. 252, 253. Bout. 24, 25. Lab. i. 307.

St-Cyr had from the beginning conjectured, from the perfect stillness of the Allied army along the whole Bohemian frontier, contrasted with the incessant rattle of tirailleurs which Blucher kept up in front of his line, that the real attack was intended to be made outside of Dresden. But having been unable to get the Emperor to share in his opinion, he was left alone to make head against the torrent. Too experienced, however, to attempt to withstand so vast a force with the comparatively few troops at his disposal, he contented himself with impeding their advance as much as possible; and, after some sharp encounters with Wittgenstein's advanced guard, withdrew

14. The Allies approach Dresden.

adequately garrisoned, chiefly from the landwehr, and the main army will retire upon Neisse. That place, with its intrenched camp, which must be put in a proper posture of defence, will serve as a *point-d'appui* to it; while the army of Bohemia, and that of the Prince-Royal of Sweden, will take the enemy in rear. Should the enemy, on the other hand, direct his principal attack against the army of the Prince-Royal of Sweden, or on Berlin, the army of Silesia will resume the offensive; and the bulk of the Allied forces will be directed against his rear, the army of Silesia on the right bank of the Elbe, that of Bohemia on the left bank." —*Instructions to* FIELD-MARSHAL BLUCHER. ST-CYR, *Histoire Militaire*, iv. 349.

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within the redoubts of Dresden, while Wittgenstein occupied the town of Pirna, and the Allied headquarters were advanced to Dippoldiswalde. Schwartzenberg's original intention was not to have moved on Dresden, but to have directed the main body of his force on Freyberg, with a view to a combined operation with Bernadotte in the neighbourhood of Leipsic; and it was only after arriving at Marienberg on the 23d, that this plan was abandoned. Without doubt, the movement upon Dresden promised infinitely greater and more immediate results than an advance into the plains of Saxony; but it was owing to the time lost in this march and countermarch, that the failure of the operation was owing. For if their whole force had from the first marched direct upon Dresden, they would have arrived before its walls on the evening of the 23d, and it might have been carried by assault on the day following, thirty hours before the nearest of Napoleon's troops could have come up to its relief.[1]

[1] St-Cyr, iv. 85, 86. Bout. 26, 27. Fain, ii. 252, 253. Jom. iv. 380.

15. Important advantage gained by this movement.

As it was, the Allies had now accomplished the greatest feat in strategy: they had thrown themselves in almost irresistible strength upon the enemy's communications, without compromising their own. Nothing was wanting but vigour in following up the measure, adequate to the ability with which it had been conceived; and Dresden would have been taken, a corps of the French army destroyed, and the defensive position on the Elbe, the base of Napoleon's whole positions in Germany, broken through and rendered useless. But to attain these great objects, the utmost vigour and celerity in attack were indispensable; for Napoleon was at no great distance on the right bank of the Elbe, and it might with certainty be anticipated, that as soon as he was made aware of the danger with which the centre of his power was threatened, he would make the utmost possible exertions to come up to its relief. The Allies arrived, however, in time to gain their object if they had followed up their movement with sufficient activity. Notwithstanding the unnecessary

detour towards Freyberg, part of their army reached the neighbourhood of Dresden on the evening of the 23d,* and next morning the trembling inhabitants of that beautiful city beheld the smiling hills around their walls resplendent with bayonets, and studded with a portentous array of artillery. During the whole of the 24th, the troops, who were extremely fatigued, continued to arrive; and on the morning of the 25th, a hundred and twenty thousand men, with above five hundred pieces of cannon, were assembled round the city.† Moreau and Jomini warmly counselled an immediate attack; and Lord Cathcart, who with his usual gallantry had rode forward over the green turf behind the Grosse Garten, between Plauen and Raecknitz, to the close vicinity of the enemy's posts, reported that the coast was clear, and strongly supported the same advice. Alexander was clear for adopting it; but Schwartzenberg and the Austrians, accustomed only to the methodical habits of former wars, and insensible to the inestimable importance of time in combating Napoleon, insisted upon deferring the attack, till Klenau's corps, which, being on the extreme left, had not yet arrived from Freyberg, should be in line. This opinion prevailed, as the most lukewarm and timid invariably does with all *small* assemblies of men on whom a serious responsibility is thrown;[1] ‡ the attack was deferred till the

[1] Bout. 27. Jom. iv. 382, 383. St-Cyr, iv. 96, 99. Lond. iii.

* "Dresden, 23d *August* 1813, *Ten at night.*—At five this afternoon the enemy approached Dresden, after having driven in our cavalry. We expected an attack this evening, but probably it will take place to-morrow. Your majesty knows better than I do, what time it requires for heavy artillery to beat down enclosure walls and palisades."—St-Cyr *to* Napoleon, 23*d August* 1813. St-Cyr, iv. 380.

† "An immense army, composed of Russians, Prussians, and Austrians, is at this moment all around Dresden, with a prodigious train of artillery. From the vast amount of force which he has thus collected, it would appear that the enemy is determined to hazard an attack, knowing that your majesty is not far off, though perhaps not suspecting that you are so near as you actually are. We are determined to do all in our power; but I can answer for nothing more with such young soldiers."—St-Cyr *to* Napoleon, 25*th August* 1813, *Midnight;* St-Cyr, iv. 384, 385.

‡ Observe, *small* assemblies of men, such as juries or councils of war. Rash counsels are often adopted in large assemblies, for the plain reason, that indi-

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following afternoon, and meanwhile Napoleon arrived with his cuirassiers and Guards, bearing the issue of the strife upon their sabre points.*

16. Schwartzenberg's proclamation to his troops.

On approaching Dresden, Schwartzenberg issued the following order of the day to his troops:—"The great day is arrived, brave warriors! Our country reckons on you: heretofore she has never been disappointed. All our efforts to obtain peace on equitable terms, such terms as alone can be durable—have failed. Nothing could bring back the French government to moderation and reason. We enter not alone into the strife: all that Europe can oppose to the powerful enemy of peace and liberty, is on our side. Austria, Russia, Prussia, Sweden, England, Spain, all combine their efforts to attain the same object—a solid and durable peace; a reasonable distribution of force between the different powers, and the independence of each individual state. It is not against France, but the overwhelming domination of France beyond its own limits, that this great alliance has been formed. Spain and Russia have proved what the constancy and resolution of a people can do. The year 1813 will demonstrate what can be effected by the united force of so many powerful states. In a war so sacred, we require more than ever to practise those virtues by which our armies in time past have been so distinguished. Devotion without bounds to our monarch and our country: magnanimity alike in success or reverse: determination and constancy on the field of battle: moderation and humanity towards the weak—such are the virtues of which you should ever give the example. The Emperor will remain with you; for he has trusted to your arms

vidual responsibility is lost amid numbers. Individuals trusted with supreme powers are so frequently bold, because the dread of responsibility is merged in a sense of duty or a desire of distinction which no one else can share.

* The preceding account of what passed before Dresden on the 25th, is entirely confirmed by the minute details on the subject I have often received from my highly esteemed and venerable friend, the late Lord Cathcart himself.

all that he holds most dear—the honour of the nation, the protection of our country, the security and welfare of posterity. Be grateful, warriors, that you march before God, who will never abandon the cause of justice; and under the eyes of a monarch whose paternal sentiments and affection are well known to you. Europe awaits her deliverance at your hands, after so long a train of misfortunes."[1]

[1] Cap. ix. 196, 198.

17. Napoleon returns towards Dresden. Aug. 24.

Napoleon, having received intelligence of the movements of the Allies across the Bohemian frontier, had halted at Lowenberg on the 23d; and after giving the command of the army destined to combat Blucher to Marshal Macdonald, retraced his steps the same day, accompanied by the reserve cavalry and Guards, to Görlitz. The same evening Murat was sent on to Dresden to inform the King of Saxony and St-Cyr of the speedy arrival of the Emperor with the flower of his army; and such was the confidence which prevailed at headquarters, that Berthier said in a careless way—"Well, we shall gain a great battle: we shall march on Prague, on Berlin, on Vienna!" The soldiers, however, who marched on their feet, and did not ride like Berthier in an easy carriage, though animated with the same spirit, were by no means equally confident. They were ready to sink under their excessive fatigue, having marched since the renewal of hostilities nearly ten leagues a-day; and such was their worn-out condition, that the Emperor ordered twenty thousand bottles of wine to be purchased at Görlitz, and distributed among the Guards alone. So complete, however, was the exhaustion of the country, from having so long been the seat of war, that hardly a tenth part of that quantity could be procured, and the greater part of the wearied men pursued their march without any other than the scanty supplies which they could themselves extract by terror from the inhabitants. Napoleon continued his advance in the middle of his Guards all the 24th, and halted at Bautzen.[2] He there resolved to con-

[2] Fain, ii. 256, 257. Bout. 30. Odel. i. 248, 249. Die Grosse Chron. i. 374, 386.

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tinue his march direct upon Dresden, or move to the left upon Pirna, and threaten the communications and rear of the Allies, according to the information he might receive as to whether or not that capital, unaided, could hold out till the 28th.

18. Reasons of Napoleon's return to Dresden. Aug. 25.

Early on the following morning, the Emperor resumed his march, still keeping the road which led alike to Dresden and Pirna, with the design of throwing himself, if possible, on the rear of the Allies. Having, however, the day before despatched General Gourgaud to Dresden* to obtain information as to the state of the city, he halted, according to agreement, at Stolpen, where the road to Dresden branches off from that to Bohemia, and there received the most alarming intelligence as to the state of affairs in the Saxon capital. The letters both of Murat and St-Cyr left no room for doubt that the city was in the most imminent danger; that the accidental delay in the attack had alone hitherto preserved it; and that its fall might hourly be looked for. At eleven at night Gourgaud returned, and confirmed the intelligence; adding, that it was surrounded by so vast an army, that not a chance remained of holding out another day but from the immediate return of the Emperor. Already the lines of investiture extended from Pirna to Plauen; and nothing but the arrival of Klenau, the approach of whose columns was already announced, was wanting, to enable the enemy to complete the circle from the Upper to the Lower Elbe.[1] Preparations were already made for evacuating the Grosse Garten: the glare of a village in flames

[1] Fain, ii. 257, 258. St-Cyr, iv. 98, 99. Grosse Chron. i. 374, 380.

* "To-morrow," said Napoleon to General Gourgaud, "I shall be on the road to Pirna; but I shall stop at Stolpen. Set you out immediately for Dresden; ride as hard as you can, and be there this evening; see St-Cyr, the King of Naples, and the King of Saxony; reassure every one. Tell them to-morrow I can be in Dresden with forty thousand men, and the day following arrive there with my whole army. At daybreak visit the redoubts and outposts; consult the commander of engineers as to whether they can hold out. Return to me as quickly as possible to-morrow at Stolpen, and report well the opinion of Murat and St-Cyr as to the real state of things."—*24th August* 1813. Fain, ii. 256.

immediately behind it, threw an ominous light on the domes of Dresden; and when Gourgaud left the city shortly after dark, the whole heavens to the south and west were resplendent with the fires of the enemy's bivouacs.

19. Instructions to Vandamme.

Napoleon now saw that affairs were urgent: there was not a moment to be lost if Dresden was to be saved, and the communications of the army preserved. He instantly sent for General Haxo, the celebrated engineer, and thus addressed him: — Vandamme is beyond the Elbe, near Pirna: he will find himself on the rear of the enemy, whose anxiety to get possession of Dresden is evidently extreme. My design was to have followed up that movement with my whole army: it would, perhaps, have been the most effectual way to have brought matters to an issue with the enemy; but the fate of Dresden disquiets me. I cannot bring myself to sacrifice that town. Some hours must elapse before I can reach it; but I have decided, not without regret, to change my plan, and to march to its relief. Vandamme is in sufficient strength to play an important part in that general movement, and inflict an essential injury on the enemy. *Let him advance from Pirna to Gieshübel*, and gain the heights of Petershalde; let him maintain himself there, occupy all the defiles, and from that impregnable post await the issue of events around Dresden. To him is destined the lot of receiving the sword of the vanquished; but he will require *sang-froid:* above all, do not let him be imposed upon by a rabble of fugitives. Explain fully my intentions to Vandamme; tell him what I expect from him. Never will he have a finer opportunity of earning his marshal's baton." Haxo immediately set out, descended from the heights of Stolpen into the gorges of Lilienstein, joined Vandamme, and never again quitted his side.[1]

[1] Fain, ii. 259, 260.

By daybreak on the following morning, the whole troops around the Emperor's headquarters were in motion, and defiling on the road to Dresden. Despite

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20. Entrance of the French Guards into Dresden.

Atlas, Plate 84.

their excessive fatigue, having marched forty leagues in four days, they pressed ardently forward; for now the cannon were distinctly heard from the left bank of the Elbe, and the breathless couriers who succeeded each other from the Saxon capital announced, that, if they did not speedily arrive, the city was lost. The Guards were at the head of the array; next came Latour Maubourg's cuirassiers, then Victor's infantry and Kellermann's cavalry; while Marmont's corps moved in a parallel line on the direct road from Bautzen, which they had never left. At eight o'clock the advanced guard reached the elevated plateau where the roads of Bautzen, of Stolpen, and of Pillnitz, intersect each other, shortly before the entry of the new town of Dresden, and from which the eye can survey the whole plain on the other side of the Elbe. With what anxiety did they behold it entirely filled by an innumerable host of enemies; and the hostile columns so near the advanced works that an assault might every instant be expected! Already the Prussian uniforms were to be seen in full possession of the Grosse Garten: columns of attack were forming within cannon-shot of the suburb of Pirna; while, on the banks of the Elbe, Wittgenstein had constructed batteries to enfilade the road by which the troops were to enter the capital. Dresden was surrounded on all sides: the suburb of Friedrichstadt alone was not enveloped. The French were visible in force in the redoubts and behind the works; but their numbers appeared a handful in the midst of the interminable lines of the beleaguering host; and a silence more terrible than the roar of artillery, bespoke the awful moments of suspense which preceded the commencement of the fight.[1]

[1] Fain, ii. 261, 263. St-Cyr, iv. 99, 100. Odel. i. 250. Grosse Chron. i. 381, 390.

21. Arrival of the Emperor in Dresden. Aug. 26.

No sooner, however, did the French advanced-guard appear than the contest commenced. So violent was the fire kept up by Wittgenstein's guns on the road by which the Emperor was to pass, that he was obliged to leave his carriage, and creep along the ground on his hands and

knees over the exposed part; while the bullets from the Russian batteries on the one side, and the bombs from the redoubt Marcellini on the other, flew over his head. Having in this way got over the dangerous ground, he suddenly made his appearance at ten o'clock at the Marcellini palace, to the no small astonishment of its royal inmates, who were deliberating on the necessity of coming to terms with the enemy. After a short stay with the King, whom he reassured by the promise of the speedy arrival of his Guards, Napoleon went out to visit the exterior works from the barrier of Pirna to that of Freyberg, accompanied only by a single page to avoid attracting attention; and so close were the enemy's posts now in that quarter, that the youth was wounded by a spent musket-ball, while standing at the Emperor's side.[1]

[1] Lab. ii. 309. Fain, ii. 264. Odel. i. 249, 251.

22. Arrival of the Guards and cuirassiers.

Having completed this important reconnoissance, on which his operations for the day in a great measure depended, Napoleon returned to the palace, and sent out couriers in all directions to convey his orders to the corps which successively arrived for the defence of the capital. Meanwhile the Guards and cuirassiers, in great strength, followed the Emperor like a torrent across the bridges into the city; and it was soon apparent, from their numbers and gallant bearing, that all immediate danger was at an end. In vain the inhabitants offered them refreshments; these brave men, impressed to the lowest drummer with the urgency of the moment, continued to press on, though burning with thirst, and ready to drop down under the ardent rays of the sun. From ten in the morning till late at night, ceaseless columns of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, pressed without a moment's intermission over both the bridges; and while the enemy's columns darkened the brows of the heights of Raecknitz, the gallant cuirassiers, in defiling over the bridges, keeping their eyes fixed on the spot, held their heads the higher, and passed on undaunted.[2]

[2] Odel. i. 249, 252, and ii. 164. Fain, ii. 264, 265. Lab. ii. 309, 310. Grosse Chron. i. 391, 394.

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23. Formidable attack on Dresden.

Aug. 26.

At length, at four o'clock in the afternoon, Schwartzenberg's patience, which had long held out for the arrival of Klenau's corps, which had not yet come up, became exhausted, and he gave the signal for the attack. Instantly the batteries on all the heights round the city were brought forward, and above a hundred guns in the front line commenced a terrible fire on its works and buildings. The bombs and cannon-balls fell on all sides, and over its whole extent. Several houses speedily took fire; the inhabitants, in despair, sought refuge in the cellars and vaults to avoid the effects of the bombardment; while the frequent bursting of shells in the streets, the loud thunder of the artillery from the ramparts and redoubts, the heavy rolling of the guns and ammunition waggons along the pavement, the cries of the drivers, and measured tread of the marching men who forced their way through the throng, combined to produce a scene of unexampled sublimity and terror. Every street and square in Dresden was by this time crowded with troops; above sixty thousand men had defiled over the bridges since ten o'clock, and the balls fell and bombs exploded with dreadful effect among their dense masses.[1]

[1] Lond. 112. Odel. i. 251. Torm. Ocul. ii. 166. Fain, ii. 268. Die Grosse Chron. i. 399, 400.

24. Awful aspect of the Allied columns as they attacked Dresden.

The attack of the Allies was indeed terrible. At the signal of three guns, fired from the headquarters on the heights of Raecknitz, six dark columns, deep and massy, descended from the heights, each preceded by fifty pieces of artillery, and advanced, with a steady step and in the finest order, against the city. It was an awful, but yet an animating sight, when these immense masses, without firing a shot or breaking the regularity of their array, descended in silent majesty towards the walls. No force on earth seemed capable of resisting them; so vast, yet orderly was the array, that their tread, when hardly within cannon-shot, could be distinctly heard from the ramparts. Wittgenstein commanded the three columns on the right, who advanced from the Grosse Garten; Kleist's Prussians in the centre moved partly through the

Grosse Garten, partly over the open ground to their left, under Prince Augustus of Prussia, and with them were combined three divisions of Austrians under Count Colloredo; the remainder of the Austrians on the left, under Prince Maurice of Lichtenstein, formed the completion of the vast array. Soon the beautiful buildings of Dresden were enveloped in smoke and flame; an incessant fire issued from the works; while the Allied batteries on the semicircle of heights around sent a storm of projectiles through the air, and the moving batteries in front of their columns steadily advanced towards the embrasures of the redoubts.[1]

[1] Lond. 112, 113. Odel. i. 252. Tém. Ocul. ii. 166, 167. Fain, ii. 268, 269. Vaud. i. 152. Kausler, 645. Grosse Chron. i. 400, 404.

25. Early success of the Allies.

At some points the attack was irresistible. The great redoubt, situated in front of the Moczinski Garten, was stormed in the most gallant style, after its palisades had been beaten down, by the Austrians under Colloredo. Sir Robert Wilson, ever foremost where danger was to be encountered or glory won, was the first man who entered it. At the same time, an impetuous attack by the Russians under Wittgenstein, carried the redoubts on the left, near the Hopfgarten; while Kleist, with his ardent Prussians, drove the enemy entirely out of the Grosse Garten, and approached on that side close to the barriers of the suburb. The French, by bringing up fresh troops, regained the Moczinski redoubt; but the fire of the Austrian batteries, which now enfiladed it on both sides, was so terrible, that the men who entered were almost all destroyed, and the work again fell into the enemy's hands. By six o'clock in the evening, the last reserves of St Cyr's corps had been all engaged; the suburbs were furiously attacked, as well on the side of Pirna as that of Plauen. Napoleon, seriously disquieted, had stationed all the disposable battalions of the Old Guard at the threatened barriers, and was despatching courier after courier to hasten the march of the Young Guard.[2] Meanwhile the Austrian guns were furiously battering the rampart, at the distance only of a hundred paces; a tempest of

[2] Fain, ii. 270, 271. Odel. i. 253, 254. Tém. Ocul. Ibid. ii. 169, 170. Grosse Chron. i. 406, 407.

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bombs and cannon-balls was falling on all sides; the trembling inhabitants were wounded as soon as they appeared at their doors; frequent explosions of shells and ammunition-waggons in the streets diffused universal consternation: already the hatchets of the pioneers were heard at the gate of Plauen and barrier of Dippoldiswalde, and the triumphant cry was heard among the assailants, "To Paris! to Paris!"

26. Sally by Napoleon, which repels the attack.

Napoleon, who had evinced great anxiety while this tremendous attack was going forward, was at length relieved at half-past six by the arrival of the Young Guard, and now deemed himself in sufficient strength to hazard a sally at each extremity of his position. The gate of Plauen was thrown open, and the dense masses of the Guard under Ney rushed furiously out; while a quick discharge of musketry from the loopholed walls and windows of the adjacent houses, favoured their sortie. The Austrian columns, little anticipating so formidable an outset, fell back in disorder: and the French Guards, taking advantage of the moment when the gate was free, defiled rapidly out, and, forming in line on either side of it, by their increasing mass and enthusiastic valour gained ground on the enemy. Similar sorties took place at the gate of Pirna and at the barrier of Dippoldiswalde. At all points the assailants, wholly unprepared for such an attack, and deeming the day already won, lost ground; the Young Guard, with loud cheers, regained the blood-stained redoubt of Moczinski; the left, under Mortier, drove the Russians from the suburb of Pirna, and dislodged the Prussians from the Grosse Garten; while Murat, issuing with his formidable squadrons from the gate of Plauen, established himself for the night in the rear of the right wing under Ney, which had emerged altogether from the suburbs on the road to Freyberg into the open country.[1] Astonished at this unexpected resistance, which they had by no means anticipated, and perceiving, from the strength of the columns which

[1] St-Cyr, iv. 104, 106. Lab. ii. 313, 314. Lond. 113, 114. Fain, ii. 270, 271. Bout. 29. Grosse Chron. i. 410, 415.

had issued from the city, as well as the vigour of the attacks, that Napoleon in person directed the defence, the Allied generals drew off their troops for the night ; but, not yet despairing of final success, they resolved to await a pitched battle on the adjacent heights, on the following morning.

27. State of both parties during the night.

The weather, which for some days previous had been serene and intensely hot, now suddenly changed ; vast clouds filled the skies, and soon the surcharged moisture poured itself out in a torrent of rain. Regardless of the storm, Napoleon traversed the city after it was dark, and waited on the bridge till Marmont and Victor's corps began to defile over. As soon as he was assured of their arrival, he returned hastily through the streets, again issued forth on the other side, and, by the light of the bivouacs, visited the whole line occupied by his troops, now entirely outside the city, from the barrier of Pirna to the subsurb of Friedrichstadt. The force he had accumulated was such as to put him in a condition, not only to repel any further attack which might be directed against the city, but to resume the offensive at all points. In addition to the corps of St-Cyr, Marmont, and Victor, he had at his command the whole Guards, and all the heavy horse of Milhaud and Latour Maubourg, under Murat ; at least a hundred and twenty thousand men, of whom twenty thousand were admirable cavalry. His position at Dresden also gave him very great advantages ; for by securing his centre by means of a fortress, of which the strength had been tried on the preceding day, it enabled him to throw the weight of his forces on the two flanks. On the other hand the Allies, having no such protection for the middle of their line, were under the necessity of strengthening it equally in all quarters, and thus in all probability would be inferior to the enemy at the real points of attack. Considerable reinforcements, however, came up during the night from the side of Freyberg ; and although Klenau had not yet made his

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appearance, yet his arrival was positively announced for the following day. Notwithstanding the loss of six thousand men in the assault of Dresden, they had now nearly a hundred and sixty thousand men in line, independent of Klenau, who it was hoped would come up before the action was over. They resolved, therefore, to await the attack of the enemy on the following day; and, withdrawing altogether from cannon-shot of the ramparts, arranged their formidable masses in the form of a semicircle on the heights around the walls, from the Elbe above the suburb of Pirna, to the foot of the slopes of Wolfnitz, below the city.[1]

[1] Lond. 114, 115. Bout. 29, 31. Odel. ii. 255, 256. Jom. iv. 390, 391.

28. Napoleon's dispositions on the 27th.

Napoleon disposed his troops during the night as follows:—The right wing, composed of the corps of Victor, and the cavalry of Latour Maubourg, was stationed in front of the gate of Wildsdrack, and in the fields and low grounds from that down the Elbe towards Priesnitz; the centre, under the Emperor in person, comprised the corps of Marmont and St-Cyr, having the infantry and cavalry of the Old Guard in reserve, supported by the three great redoubts; on the left, Ney had the command, and directed the four divisions of the Young Guard and the cavalry of Kellermann, which extended to the Elbe, beyond the suburb of Pirna. Above a hundred and thirty thousand men * were by daylight on the following morning assembled in this position, having Dresden, bristling with cannon, as a vast fortress to support their centre.[2] But their position was extraordinary, and, if

[2] Bout. 31, 32. Lond. 114, 115. Vaud. 154. Jom. iv. 390. St-Cyr, iv. 110, 111.

* St-Cyr's corps, three divisions, . . 20,000
Marmont's do. three divisions, . . 22,000
Victor's do. four divisions, . . . 28,000
Latour-Maubourg's cavalry, four divisions, . 14,000
Kellermann's do. three divisions, . 9,000
Infantry of the Old Guard, . . . 6,000
Do. of the Young Guard, four divisions, . 28,000
Cavalry of the Guard, four divisions, . . 4,000

131,000

—Londonderry, 114; Vaudoncourt, i. 129.

they were defeated, altogether desperate ; for they fought with their backs to the Elbe, and their faces to the Rhine : the Allied army, in great strength, had intercepted their whole communications with France, and if worsted, they would be thrown back into a town with only two bridges traversing an otherwise impassable river in their rear.

29. Positions of the Allied troops.

On the other side, the Allies arranged their troops in the following manner :—On the right, Wittgenstein commanded the Russians on the road to Pirna, and Kleist the Prussians between Striesen and Strehlen : in the centre, Schwartzenberg, with the corps of Colloredo, Chastellar, and Bianchi's grenadiers in reserve, occupied the semicircle of heights which extend from Strehlen by Raecknitz to Plauen ; while beyond Plauen, on the left, were posted the corps of Giulay and one division of Klenau's troops, which had at length come up. But from the extreme Allied left, at the foot of the heights of Wolfnitz to Priesnitz, was a vacant space wholly unoccupied, destined for the remainder of Klenau's men when they should arrive ; and the whole of that wing was not only intrusted to inexperienced troops, but was destitute of any solid support, either from inequality of ground or from villages. This oversight on the part of the general-in-chief was the more reprehensible, as they stood opposite to the terrible cuirassiers of Latour Maubourg, fourteen thousand strong, with nothing but an intervening level space for the horse to charge over ; while, if they had been drawn back half a mile, to the passes and broken ground in their rear, or not pushed across the precipitous defile of Tharandt, which separated them from the main army, they would have been beyond the reach of danger.[1]

[1] Vaud. i. 154, 155. Bout. 32, 33. Jom. iv. 390, 391. Sy-Cyr, iv. 111, 112.

30. Battle of the 27th August.

Both armies passed a cheerless night, drenched to the skin by the torrents of rain which never ceased to descend with uncommon violence. Napoleon, however, who had supped with the King of Saxony the night before in the

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highest spirits, was on horseback at six in the morning, and rode out to the neighbourhood of the great redoubt, which had been the scene of such a desperate contest on the preceding day. Ghastly traces of the combat were to be seen on all sides; out of the newly-made graves hands and arms were projecting, which stuck up stark and stiff from the earth in the most frightful manner. The Emperor took his station beside a great fire which had been lighted by his troops in the middle of the squares of the Old Guard, and immediately behind were the cavalry of the cuirassiers dismounted beside their horses. The cannonade soon began along the whole line; but it was kept up for some hours only in a desultory manner, the excessive rain and thick mist rendering it impossible either to move the infantry, or point the guns with precision. Jomini strongly urged the Allied sovereigns during the interval to change the front of their line; and, accumulating their force on the enemy's left, which was next the Elbe, to cut off Vandamme and Poniatowski, who were at Pirna and Zittau, from the remainder of the army. This manœuvre, which would have re-established affairs, was altogether foreign to Schwartzenberg's ideas, which were entirely based upon cutting off the French communications by their right with Torgau and Leipsic. Meanwhile the French right gradually gained ground upon the detached corps of Austrians beyond the ravine on the Allied left, which was equally incapable of maintaining itself by its intrinsic strength, or obtaining succour across the chasm from the centre; and Klenau, though strenuously urged to accelerate his movements, had not yet come up.[1]

[1] Bout. 33. St-Cyr, iv. 110, 111. Jom. iv. 390, 391. Lond. 115. Grosse Chron. i. 406, 410.

31. Total defeat of the Austrian left.

Napoleon was not long of turning to the best account this state of matters in the Allied line. Occupying himself a strong central position, and in a situation to strike at any portion of the vast semicircular line which lay before him, he had also this immense advantage, that the thick mist and incessant rain rendered it impossible, not

only for the Allied generals to see against what quarter preparations were directed, but even for the commanders of corps to perceive the enemy until they were close upon them. This last circumstance led to a most serious catastrophe on the left. Unperceived by the enemy, Murat had stolen round in the rear of Victor's men, entirely turning the flank of the Austrians, and got with Latour Maubourg's formidable cuirassiers into the low meadows which lie between Wolfnitz and the Elbe, in the direction of Priesnitz, where it was intended that Klenau's corps should have completed the Allied line to the river. Shrouded by the mist, he had thus placed himself with his whole force close to the extreme Austrian left, and almost perpendicular to their line, before they were aware of his approach. Murat, in order to divert the enemy's attention from this decisive attack, caused Victor's infantry to occupy Löbda in their front, from whence they advanced in column against the line, and kept up a heavy cannonade from a strong battery posted on an eminence on their left. When the action had become warm between the foot, he suddenly burst, with twelve thousand chosen horsemen, out of the mist, on their flank and rear. So heavy had been the rain that scarce any of the Austrian muskets would go off. The effect of this onset, as of the Polish lancers, under similar circumstances, on the English infantry at Albuera, was decisive. The Austrians, before they had time to throw themselves into square, were broken by the formidable heavy-armed French lancers—a force novel in modern war, but which, like the charge of the steel-clad knights of old, proved irresistible.* In a few minutes the line was broken through, pierced in all directions, and cut to pieces.[1] A

[1] Marmont's Voyages, i. 259. Kausler, 651. Bout. 32, 33. Lab. ii. 309, 310. St-Cyr, iv. 111, 112. Jom. iv. 391, 392.

* Marshal Marmont, who commanded the attack, ascribes the successful issue of this cavalry charge, one of the most important made during the whole war, to its being made by cuirassiers armed with lances; the cuirass giving confidence to the mind, while the lance tripled the power of the arm. "On ne vint à bout de cette infanterie, qu'en faisant prendre les cuirassiers, par cinquante lanciers de l'escorte du Général Latour Maubourg, qui firent brèche,

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few battalions next the centre made their way across the ravine, and escaped; the whole remainder, being three-fourths of the entire corps, with General Metsko, were killed or made prisoners.

32. Operations on the French left.

No sooner was Napoleon made aware, by the advancing cannonade on his right, that Murat's attack had proved successful, than he gave orders for his left to advance against Wittgenstein, while the action in the centre was still confined to a distant cannonade. Ney had concentrated the four divisions of the Young Guard between the Grosse Garten and the Elbe, and with them and Kellermann's dragoons he immediately made a vigorous attack upon the enemy. He was received by the Russians with their wonted steadiness. The villages of Seidnitz and Gross Dobritz were gallantly defended, against an overwhelming superiority of force, by General de Roth; and when he could no longer make them good, he retreated, in good order, to the main body of Wittgenstein's men, placed in the rear behind Reick. Jomini, seeing Ney far advanced along the Elbe, and showing his flank to the Allied centre, counselled the Emperor Alexander to move forward Kleist, Milaradowitch, Colloredo, and the masses of the centre which had not yet been engaged, and assail his columns in flank, by Strehlen—a movement which promised the most important results, and would probably have balanced the success of Murat on the left. Alexander at once appreciated the importance of this movement, and Kleist and Milaradowitch were already in motion to execute it; but to support them, and fill up the chasm in the line occasioned by their descending the hills to the right, it was necessary that Barclay de Tolly, with the Russian reserve, should advance to the front.[1] Barclay, however, did not move:

[1] Jom. iv. 394, 395. Bout. 33. Kausler, 650, 351. St-Cyr, iv. 3. Loud. 121. Grosse Chron. i. 416, 421.

et donnèrent à ceux-là le moyen de pénétrer et de tout détruire. Ces lanciers purent approcher impunément, attendu que les coups de fusil, à cause de la pluie, étaient rares; mais la question n'eût pas été incertaine dans tous les cas, si les cuirassiers eussent été eux-mêmes armés de la lance redoutable."—MARMONT, *Voyages*, i. 259.

the signal made for that purpose was at first not seen in consequence of the mist, and subsequently disregarded; and before the order could be renewed by an officer, a dreadful catastrophe had occurred, which in a great measure determined the Allies to retreat.

33. Wound and death of Moreau.

Moreau, who had with equal energy and ability discharged the important duties committed to him in the council of the Allies ever since the campaign reopened, was in earnest conversation with the Emperor Alexander about this very advance of Barclay's, when a cannon-shot from the French batteries in the centre almost carried off both his legs, the ball passing through the body of his horse. This melancholy event excited a very deep sensation at the Allied headquarters, and for a time diverted Alexander's attention at the most critical moment of the action. The interest which it awakened was enhanced by the extraordinary heroism which the wounded general evinced under an excess of pain which might well have shaken any man's fortitude. He never uttered a groan while carried to the rear, with his mangled limbs hanging by the skin; and when laid on the table of the cottage into which he was carried to suffer amputation, he called for a cigar, which he smoked with the utmost tranquillity. He bore the painful operation with the same firmness which had distinguished his whole demeanour since his wound: and when the surgeon who had cut off the right leg examined the other, and pronounced, with a faltering voice, that it was impossible to save it—"Cut it off then, also," said he calmly, which was immediately done. When the retreat commenced, he was transported in a litter to Laun, where he wrote a letter to his wife singularly characteristic of his mind.* Alexander was

* "My Dearest—At the battle of Dresden, three days ago, I had both my legs carried off by a cannon-ball. That rascal Buonaparte is always fortunate. They have performed the amputation as well as possible. Though the army has made a retrograde movement, it is by no means a reverse, but of design to draw nearer to General Blucher. Excuse my scrawl: I love and embrace you with my whole heart."—Capefigue, x. 201.

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indefatigable in his attentions to the illustrious patient, and sanguine hopes were at one period entertained of his recovery: but at the end of five days fever supervened, and he expired with the same stoicism as he had lived, but without giving the slightest trace of religious impression. His body was embalmed and conveyed to Prague, whence it was transported to St Petersburg, and buried in the Catholic church of that capital with the same honours as had been paid to the remains of Kutusoff. Alexander wrote a touching letter to his widow, * and presented her with a gift of five hundred thousand roubles, (£20,000,) and a pension of thirty thousand, (£1200;) but the remains of Moreau remained far from his native land, and amidst the enemies of the people whom he had conducted with so much glory.[1]†

[1] Lond. 115, 121. Capef. x. 201, 202. Biog. Univ. xxx. 95, 96.

34. Singular manner in which he came by his death.

The manner in which this great general met his death-wound was very remarkable. The cannon of the Guard, which were posted in front of the position which Napoleon occupied, had been observed for some time to exhibit an unusual degree of languor in replying to the discharges of the enemy; and the Emperor sent Gourgaud forward to inquire into the cause of so unusual a circum-

* "When the frightful catastrophe which befel General Moreau, at my side, deprived me of the guidance and experience of that great man, I indulged the hope that by means of care he might yet be preserved for his family and my friendship. Providence has disposed it otherwise; he has died as he lived, in the full possession of a great and constant mind. There is but one alleviation to the evils of life: the assurance that they are sympathised with by others. In Russia, Madame, you will everywhere find these sentiments; and if it should suit your arrangements to fix yourself there, I will strive to do everything in my power to embellish the existence of a person of whom I consider it a sacred duty to be the support and consolation. I pray you, Madame, to count on this irrevocably, and not to permit me to remain in ignorance of any circumstance in which I can be of any service to you, and always to write to me directly. The friendship which I had vowed to your husband extends beyond the tomb; and I have no other means of discharging what is but in part the debt which I owe him, but by attending to the comfort of his family. Receive, Madame, in these sad and mournful circumstances, the assurances of my unalterable friendship—ALEXANDER."—See CAPEFIGUE, x. 205, note.

† The spot where Moreau was struck, is marked by a simple monument shaded with trees; and constitutes one of the many interesting objects with which the charming environs of Dresden abound.

stance. The answer returned was, that it was to no purpose to waste their fire, as they could not reply with effect to the enemy's batteries, placed on the heights above, from so low a situation. "No matter," said the Emperor, "we must draw the attention of the enemy to that side; renew firing." Immediately they began their discharge, and directed their shot to a group of horsemen which at that moment appeared on the brow of the hill on the heights above. An extraordinary movement in the circle soon showed that some person of distinction had fallen; and Napoleon, who was strongly inclined to superstition, at first supposed it was Schwartzenberg, and referred to the sinister augury which the conflagration in his palace on the night of the fête on Marie Louise's marriage had afforded.[1] It was then, however, that Moreau was struck; and so anxious had the Emperor been to conceal the intelligence of that great commander's arrival from his troops, though well aware of it himself, that it was not till next day that it became known; when the advanced guards, in pursuing the Allies towards Bohemia, coming upon a little spaniel which was piteously moaning, were attracted by the collar round its neck, on which were written the words—"I belong to General Moreau." Thus they became at once acquainted with his presence and his fate.[2]

[1] *Ante*, ch. lxiii. § 20.

[2] Fain, ii. 291, 292. Capef. x. 202, 203. Bign. xii. 302.

35. Council of war among the Allies, when it is resolved to retreat.

A council of war was now held at the Allied headquarters as to the course which should be pursued; the Emperor Alexander, the King of Prussia, and the principal generals, assembled on horseback in a ploughed field, to deliberate on a step on which the destinies of Europe might depend. The King of Prussia was clear for continuing the action, and to this opinion the Emperor of Russia and his principal generals inclined: observing that the whole centre and reserves had not yet engaged; that the French would hardly venture to attack the middle of their position, when defended by so powerful an artillery; and that a decisive blow might yet be

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struck at the French left. But Schwartzenberg was decidedly for a retreat. Independent of the disaster on his left, which he felt the more sensibly as it had fallen almost exclusively on the Austrian troops, he was not without anxiety for his right, on account of the progress of Vandamme in his rear in that direction, who had advanced to Königstein, and already made himself master of the defile of Pirna. He strongly represented that the reserve parks of the army had not been able to get up; that the prodigious consumption of the two preceding days had nearly exhausted their ammunition, several guns having only a few rounds left; that the magazines of the army had not been able to follow its advance; in fine, that it was indispensable to regain Bohemia to prevent the dissolution of the army. These reasons, urged with the authority of the commander-in-chief, and supported by such facts, proved decisive; and a retreat was agreed to against the strenuous advice of the King of Prussia, who foresaw to what risk it would expose the Allied cause, and in an especial manner his own dominions. But it was evident that they were mere covers, put forward to conceal the sense of a defeat; no victorious army ever yet was stopped in its career by want of ammunition, and somehow or other the successful party hardly ever fails to find food.[1]*

[1] Jom. iv. 395. Bout. 34, 35. Lond. 120, 121. Bign. xii. 305.

36. Extraordinary difficulties as to the line of retreat.

But although retreat was thus resolved on before dark on the 27th, it was by no means equally clear how it was to be effected. Vandamme was master of the road by Pirna; that by Freyberg had been cut off by the successes of the King of Naples. Thus the two great roads, those by which the army had traversed the mountains, were in the enemy's hands; and the intermediate range between them was crossed only by country or inferior

* The preceding account of Moreau's wound and death, and the council of war which assembled to determine on the retreat, is entirely confirmed, and in part taken from the statement made to me, by my late friend Lord Cathcart, who was with the Emperor Alexander the whole time, and both witnessed Moreau's fall at his side, and was present at the conference.

roads, which, amidst the torrents of rain which were falling, and the innumerable chariots and guns which would have to roll over them, would soon be rendered almost impassable. There was every reason to fear that the Allied columns, defiling with these numerous encumbrances in the narrow gorges, traversed by these broken-up roads, would fall into inextricable confusion, and at the very least lose a large part of their artillery and baggage. Schwartzenberg, however, deemed the risk of a prolonged stay in presence of the enemy, after the disasters of his left, more than sufficient to counterbalance these dangers; and therefore, though Klenau came up on the night of the 27th, the retreat was persisted in the following day. The army was ordered to march in three columns; the first under Barclay de Tolly, with the Prussians of Kleist, on Peterswalde; the second under Colloredo, on Altenberg; and the third, led by Klenau, on Marienberg. Wittgenstein was intrusted with the command of the rearguard; and Ostermann, who, with a division of Russian guards and cuirassiers, had been left to oppose Vandamme on the side of Pirna, was ordered to fall back towards Peterswalde.[1]

[1] Bout. 34, 35. Jom. iv. 396, 397. Fain, ii. 288. Grosse Chron. i. 431, 440.

37. Appearance of the field of battle. Aug. 28.

Early on the morning of the 28th, Napoleon, according to his usual custom, visited the field of battle. It may be conceived what a ghastly spectacle was presented by the ground, on which, within the space of a league round the walls, three hundred thousand men had combated for two days with determined resolution, under the fire of above a thousand pieces of cannon. The wounded had, for the most part, been transported during the night into the town by the efforts of the French surgeons and the unwearied zeal of the inhabitants, who, on this occasion, as after the battle of Bautzen, exhibited in its full lustre the native benevolence of the Saxon character. But the dead still remained unburied, accumulated in frightful heaps, for the most part half naked, having been stripped by those fiends in woman's form, whom so prodigious a

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concourse of men had attracted in extraordinary numbers to the scene of woe. They lay piled above each other in vast masses around and within the Moczinski redoubt, before the Dippoldiswalde and Plauen barriers, near Löbda, and in the environs of the Grosse Garten. The profound excitement which the war had produced throughout the civilised world was there manifest; for the corpses of the slain exhibited all nations and varieties of men both of Asia and Europe. The blue-eyed Goth lay beneath the swarthy Italian; the long-haired Russian was still locked in his death-struggle with the undaunted Frank; the fiery Hun lay athwart the stout Norman; the lightsome Cossack and roving Tartar reposed far from the banks of the Don or the steppes of Samarcand. Cuirasses, muskets, sabres, helmets, belts, and cartouche-boxes lay strewn in endless disorder, which the inhabitants, stimulated by the love of gain, were collecting, with the vast numbers of cannon-balls which had sunk into the earth, for the French artillery and stores.[1]

[1] Odel. i. 262, 263. Fain, ii. 288, 294. Lab. i. 323.

36. Napoleon sets out in pursuit.

Napoleon was far from being insensible to the magnitude of the wreck, and gave orders that the principal Saxon sufferers by the siege should be indemnified as far as possible; and then rode on to the height where Moreau had been struck, and caused the distance to the battery from whence the shot issued to be measured, which proved to be two thousand yards. The vast array of the Allies was already out of sight; a few horsemen alone observed the approach of the French, who were actively engaged in the pursuit. Seeing he could not overtake them, the Emperor turned aside and rode to Pirna, where he inquired minutely into what had passed there during the two preceding eventful days. The Prince of Würtemberg, he learned, had that morning been engaged with Vandamme's corps, and was retiring in good order towards Töplitz, closely pursued by that general; Murat, with his horse, and Victor were following on the traces of the left wing, on the road to Freyberg;

and Marmont and St-Cyr's columns were pursuing the centre on the intermediate roads; while Mortier and the Young Guard advanced along the chaussée of Pirna. After sitting still an hour, he said, in the highest spirits, "Well, I think I have seen it all: make the Old Guard return to Dresden; the Young Guard will remain here in bivouac;" and, entering his carriage, returned to the capital.[1]

[1] Odel. i. 262, 265. Fain, ii. 288, 298. Lab. i. 322, 324.

39. Greatability displayed by Napoleon in this battle.

The battle of Dresden is one of the most remarkable victories ever gained by Napoleon; and if it were memorable for no other reason, it will never be forgotten for this—it was the LAST pitched battle, on a scale commensurate with his former victories, he ever gained.* The advance to Pirna seemed the fatal limit of his prosperous fortune: from the moment that he then relinquished the pursuit, he became involved in calamity; and disaster succeeded disaster till he was precipitated from the throne. Yet was this great battle a truly glorious achievement, worthy to be placed beside the brightest of his earlier career, and such as well might cast a long ray of light over the dark vista of misfortune by which it was succeeded. Anticipated by the Allies in their masterly march upon Dresden, wellnigh deprived of that vital stronghold by his never conceiving they would have the courage to attack it, he contrived, by extraordinary efforts, not only to arrive in time for its deliverance, but to discomfit the Allies by a signal defeat under its walls. This battle is the only one in his whole career in which Napoleon operated at once by both flanks, without advancing his centre; and the reason of his selecting this singular, and, in ordinary circumstances, perilous mode of attack, was this—not only did his position in front of the intrenched camp enable him to do so without risk, while

* The conflicts at Montmirail, Vauchamps, Champaubert, and Montereau, in the campaign of 1814, were combats, not battles: Ligny was a pitched battle, but it could not be called a decisive victory, at least like Napoleon's former ones; for no prisoners or standards, and few guns were taken.

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the great strength of the Allied centre forbade an attack on them in that quarter; but by gaining, by success at these two extremities, command of the roads to Freyberg and Pirna, he threw the Allies back, for their retreat to Bohemia, upon the intermediate inferior lines of communication across the mountains, where there was reason to hope that a vigorous pursuit would make them lose great part of their artillery and baggage. He afterwards adopted a similar mode of attack in the commencement of the Waterloo campaign; but his wings there being advanced at the same time, without any centre to support them, like the great fortress of Dresden, became unable to afford each other the requisite support, and lost for the Emperor advantages which had wellnigh reinstated his affairs.[1]

[1] Jom. iv. 397. Bout. 35.

40. Results of the battle on both sides.

The fruits of this victory were as great as its conception had been felicitous. Thirteen thousand prisoners, almost all Austrians, were taken. Six-and-twenty cannons, eighteen standards, and a hundred and thirty caissons, fell into the hands of the enemy. Including the killed, wounded, and missing, on the two days, the Allied loss was not short of twenty-five thousand men, while the French were not weakened by more than half the number. But these results, important and dazzling as they were, especially as re-establishing the *prestige* of the Emperor's invincibility, were but a part of the consequences of the discomfiture at Dresden. Barclay had been ordered to take the road, by Döhna and Gieshübel, to Peterswalde; but the Russian officer who delivered the order said Altenberg, by mistake, instead of Peterswalde. Barclay understood him so: the consequence of which was, that Kleist alone, with his Prussians, was left to follow the great road by Pirna, and the Russians were thrown on the road by Dippoldiswalde and Altenberg, already encumbered with the prodigious accumulation of Austrian carriages.[2] The highway was speedily cut through by the prodigious number of vehicles passing over it; the confusion of artillery and carriages of all

[2] Lond. 121. Vaud. i. 127. Bout. 36,37. Grosse Chron. i. 442, 456.

sorts became inextricable. Cannon and baggage-waggons were abandoned at every step ; and the disorder soon became extreme.

41. Dreadful confusion in the Austrian line of retreat.

Different corps of different nations got intermingled in the crowded defiles : orders were given in a language which one-half who heard them did not understand : supplies of all sorts were wanting, and it was only by straggling on either side that the soldiers for some days could pick up a scanty subsistence. A great quantity of baggage and ammunition waggons fell into the enemy's hands ; and before the troops had extricated themselves from the mountains, two thousand additional prisoners had been taken. The poet Körner, who had recovered from the wound he had so perfidiously received at the commencement of the armistice, received a ball in his breast, and died in the action : a few hours before it began, he had composed his immortal lines to his sword, the testament of his genius to his avenging countrymen.* But the most sensible loss which the Allies sustained during the retreat, was that of General Moreau, whose great talents were never more required than at that period, to arrest the evils which then menaced the very existence of the Coalition. But Providence had decreed that the cause of virtue and justice should triumph by its own native strength, and owe nothing to the forces of the Revolution, even in their most exalted or blameless form.[1]

[1] Lond. 121, 122. Jom. iv. 397. Vaud. i. 157. Bout. 36, 37. Capef. x. 207.

Great, however, as were the abilities displayed by Napoleon on this occasion, they would have failed in producing the results which took place, if he had not been

* Theodore Körner was killed at eight in the morning of the 26th August, in a field near the road from Schwerin to Gadebusch, close to a wood half a league from Rosenberg. A musket-ball which had passed through the neck of his horse, but without killing it, pierced his stomach, and shattered the spine. He breathed his last a few minutes after receiving the wound. He fell with the first shot from the enemy. Count Hardenberg, a relation of the illustrious statesman, was killed by the same volley. They were both buried under an old oak near where they fell, amidst the universal tears of the corps to which they belonged. Körner's name is engraven on the rind of the tree ; but he has left a more enduring memorial of his end in the noble song to his sword, written on the morning of the day on which he received his death-wound ; and

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42. Glaring errors of the Austrian commander on this occasion.

seconded to a wish by the imbecility displayed in the *execution* of the attack upon Dresden. The original conception of that design was in the highest degree felicitous; and by succeeding in placing themselves in overwhelming strength before that capital, and on the direct line of the enemy's communications on the 25th, when Napoleon and his Guards were still a full day's march off, they had completely out-generaled that vigilant commander, and brought him, beyond all question, to the very brink of destruction. Had they commenced the assault that afternoon, success was certain, for they were

which, more even than all the actions recounted in this history, illustrates the heroic spirit with which Germany was then animated :—

"Thou sword upon my thigh,
Those beaming glances why?
Thou look'st so pleased on me,
I've all my joy in thee.
Hurrah!"

"In the belt of a gallant knight,
My glance is ever bright;
A freeman is my lord,
And this makes glad the sword."

"Yes! trusty sword, I'm free,
And fondly cherish thee;
Dear as a bride thou art—
The treasure of my heart."

"Ah! would thy vows were mine,
As my iron life is thine!
If our nuptial-knot were tied,
Where dost thou fetch thy bride?"

"The trumpet-blast at dawn
Ushers in our wedding morn;
When the hollow cannons roar,
We'll meet to part no more."

"Oh, happy bridal state!
All anxiously I wait;
Thou bridegroom, come with speed—
Love's garland is thy meed."

"Why then, in scabbard dight,
Dost clank, thou iron delight,
So wild, so warlike now?
My sword, why rattlest thou?"

"Well may I clang, Sir Knight,
I hunger for the fight;
All wild and glad of battle,
Thus in my sheath I rattle."

"Yet keep that narrow cell;
It suits my darling well:
Bide in thy chamber lone,
Till I claim thee for my own."

"Ah! tarry not, I pray,
For in love's garden gay,
The rose has a bloody shroud,
And blossoming Death looks proud."

"Now come from thy scabbard coy,
My bride, my darling joy!
Where our gather'd kindred stand,
Thou shalt glitter in my hand."

"Oh, sumptuous wedding cheer!
What goodly guests are here!
Ay, now the steel will gleam
Like a bride in the morning beam."

Up! up! ye warriors stout;
Out! German riders, out!
Do you feel your hearts grow warm?
Take the loved one to your arm.

Erst following at your side,
A stolen glance she tried;
Now in the face of day,
God gives the maid away.

Haste! give her lips the pledge—
A kiss to the iron edge!
Tide good, or evil tide,
Curst he who fails his bride!

Now bid the charmer sing,
While sparkling sword-blades ring;
'Tis our marriage matins peal;
Hurrah! thou bride of steel!
Hurrah!

KORNER'S *Lyre and Sword:* Edinburgh, 1841. An animated and faithful translation; but even the kindred English tongue can convey no idea of the force and spirit-stirring fire of the original.

already six to one: St-Cyr and his corps would have been beaten, and the whole defensive system of Napoleon on the Elbe broken through and destroyed.

43. Great error in delaying the attack.

Even when, by delaying the attack till next day, they had given time for Napoleon himself to come up, they might still, by commencing the assault early on the forenoon of the 26th, before the bulk of his Guards had arrived, have carried the place, with the additional lustre of having done so when the Emperor in person was in command. By delaying the attack till four in the afternoon, they gained nothing; for Klenau even then had not come up; and they had merely given time to Napoleon to bring up sixty thousand additional men for the defence. It was impossible to expect to carry a fortified place, garrisoned by eighty thousand men, by a *coup-de-main;* the stroke was now too late, and should not have been delivered. The dispositions next day were equally faulty: for Schwartzenberg, contrary to all advice, insisted on extending his left over the open ground beyond Plauen, without any support against Murat's cavalry, to which, in consequence, it fell an easy prey; while by throwing it back, up the side of the ravine of Tharandt, it would have been altogether secure from attack on the top of its precipitous banks. To crown the whole, he placed inexperienced infantry there, without horse to cover them, when thirty thousand noble cavalry were massed together in useless strength behind the centre, which was already so strong from its position on the heights, and the prodigious array of artillery by which it was defended, as to be beyond the reach of danger.

44. Great divisions at the Allied headquarters.

In justice to Schwartzenberg, however, it must be observed, that these glaring errors are not to be wholly ascribed to him. It is no easy matter, as he himself said, to command an army when emperors and kings are with its general. Such were the dissensions which at this period prevailed at the Allied headquarters, that nothing

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but the most exalted spirit in the bosoms of the sovereigns who ruled its destinies, and the most indefatigable efforts on the part of the able diplomatists who were intrusted with its counsels, prevented the alliance from being broken up within a few days after it began the great contest for the deliverance of Europe. Hardenberg, Metternich, D'Anstett, Lord Aberdeen, and Sir Charles Stewart, laboured assiduously, and not without effect, to reconcile the conflicting jealousies and interests. But it was a herculean task; and nothing but a universal sense of the common danger which they all incurred, could have prevented a rupture taking place. They experienced the truth of the words of Tacitus: "prospera omnes sibi vindicant, adversa uni solo imputantur."[1]*

[1] Loud. 120.

45. All lay the blame on each other, and there is no real command.

No one would acknowledge responsibility for the advance against Dresden after it failed: to hear the opinions of the military council, you would imagine it had been forced on the army against the universal opinion of its leaders. The Russians loudly exclaimed against the Austrians as the authors of all the calamities, and referred, not without secret satisfaction, to the magnitude of the losses which they, and they alone, had sustained. The Austrians replied, that if Barclay had obeyed Schwartzenberg's order to advance on the forenoon of the 27th, all would yet have been repaired. The Prussians lamented a retrograde movement which would, to all appearance, deliver up Berlin to the cruel exactions of the enemy, and paralyse the rising spirit of Germany by the exhibition of its northern capital in chains. Conferences, political as well as military, were frequent during the retreat; the troops of the different nations would take no orders but from their own generals; it was hard to say who really governed the army, or whether it had any direction at all. Schwartzenberg deemed it advisable, situated as he was, to avoid any general action, and

* "All claim the credit of fortunate enterprises: disasters are ascribed to one alone."

remain wholly on the defensive; and it was apparent to all, that if Napoleon persevered in making propositions, there was great probability they would be listened to. Such was the untoward prospect of affairs at the Allied headquarters, when the face of events was entirely changed, unanimity and concord restored to the combined chiefs, and confidence and mutual esteem to their followers, by a series of events in the exterior circle of the conflict, so marvellous that they defeated all human calculation, and converted the recriminations of misfortune into the song of triumph, over the whole Allied states.[1]

[1] Lond. 120, 122.

46. Movements of Vandamme against Ostermann.

On the very day on which Napoleon gained his decisive success before Dresden, Vandamme was following up his instructions, to throw himself upon the rear of the Allied army and await the issue of events on the heights of Peterswalde beyond Pirna. His orders were precise, to march upon Tetschen, Aussig, and *Töplitz*, and throw himself on the enemy's communications.* He had crossed the Elbe at Königstein, and been engaged with Ostermann, who had been left to watch him with the division of the old Russian Guards and the Russian division of Prince Eugene of Würtemberg. The French general advanced towards Pirna, in order to intercept the line of the enemy's retreat, and the disproportion of force gave him good reason to hope that he would be able to do so;† for he had twenty-seven thousand infantry, three thousand cavalry, and eighty pieces of cannon; whereas the Russian had only seventeen thousand at his disposal.

* "L'Empereur désire que vous recueillez toutes les forces qu'il a mit à votre disposition, et qu'avec elles vous pénétriez en Bohème, et culbutiez le Prince de Würtemberg, s'il tentait de s'y opposer. L'ennemi que nous avons battu parait se retirer sur Annaberg. Sa Majesté pense que *vous pourriez arriver avant lui sur la communication de Töplitz*, Tetschen, et Aussig, et par là prendre ses ambulances, ses équipages, ses bagages, enfin tout ce qui marche derrière leur armée."—BERTHIER *to* VANDAMME, 28*th August* 1813. BIGNON, xii. 317.

† He had fifty-two battalions, twenty-nine squadrons, eighty guns—KAUSLER, 653; and Napoleon has told us, "they were thirty thousand strong."—See NAPOLEON *to* ST-CYR, 17*th August* 1813—ST-CYR, iv. 367.

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Ostermann in the first instance fell back also towards Pirna; but on the day following, being that on which Napoleon halted his Guard at that place, he was obliged, by the retreat of the Allies and its occupation by the French, to change the direction of his retreat, and retire towards Peterswalde. Vandamme had got before him on the high-road to that place, and the Russians had to fight their way through the enemy's ranks at Gieshübel and Nollendorf. Ostermann's grenadiers, however, forced the passage after a sharp encounter, and he reached Peterswalde, where he collected his forces, and prepared to oppose a stout resistance to Vandamme, who, having failed in barring the way to his columns, was now preparing to follow closely upon his footsteps, and press him vigorously with all his forces.[1]

[1] Kausler, 654. Jom. iv. 398. St-Cyr, iv. 128, 129. Bout. 40, 41. Vaud. i. 158. Bign. xii. 317.

47. Great interests depending on this conflict.

Atlas, Plate 85.

A great issue now depended on the efforts of these intrepid generals; nothing less than the ruin of the Allied army, or the destruction of the corps which had so fearlessly descended into its rear, was at stake. All the roads from Saxony in that direction through the Erzgebirge range, terminate at Töplitz, in the Bohemian plain. If, therefore, Vandamme could make himself master of that point of intersection, he would be in a situation to prevent the Allies debouching from the mountains; while the King of Naples on the one road, Marmont and St-Cyr in the centre, and Napoleon with the Guards on the left pass, pressed the rear of their columns, and thus exposed them to almost certain ruin when entangled with several thousand carriages among those narrow defiles and inhospitable ridges. On the other hand, if the French were defeated, they ran a still greater risk of being destroyed by the retiring masses of the grand Allied army, who would fight with the energy of despair to reopen their communication with the Bohemian plains. Thus, both parties had equal motives for exertion; both saw clearly the vital importance of the contest, and the meanest soldier in the ranks was as strongly impressed

with it as their chiefs. Vandamme now recollected the Emperor's words, that to him it would be given to receive the sword of the conquered, and that now was the time to win his marshal's baton. Ostermann was penetrated with the conviction, that on his efforts, and those of his brave Guards, would depend the safety of their beloved Emperor, and both were firmly resolved to conquer or die on the ground where they stood.[1]

[1] Jom. iv. 398, 399. Bout. 40, 41. Fain, ii. 312, 313. Lab. i. 331.

48. Battle of Culm. Aug. 29.

Vandamme, sensible of the value of time in the critical operation which had been intrusted to him, and aware that the Young Guard was at Pirna, to give him the support which Napoleon had promised him if required, eagerly descended on the morning of the 29th from the mountains, and approached the Russians, who had taken post in a good position in the plain between CULM and Töplitz, little more than half a league in advance of the latter town. Ostermann's forces, however, were now much reduced; from the losses and detachments of the preceding days, he could not collect above fourteen thousand men to defend his posts, and the French had at least double the number. Already the near approach of the enemy had spread the most violent alarm among the inhabitants of Töplitz; the whole *corps diplomatique* in particular had taken to flight, and were already far advanced on the road to Deutsch Geyserberg and Laun. The King of Prussia, who was there, and remained at his post, alone succeeded by his coolness in preserving some degree of order in the rear of the combatants. The French general, conceiving he had only to deal with the broken and dejected remains of the army beaten at Dresden, at first brought forward his troops as they successively came up into action, and hurried with only nine battalions to assault the Russian left wing. This rash attempt was speedily repulsed; but the arrival of the division of Mouton Duvernet restored the combat in that quarter, and the Russians in their turn were compelled to give way.[2] An obstinate action with various success now took place over the whole line: the

[2] Bout. 40, Jom. iv. 399. Lond. 123. Fain, ii. 314.

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villages of Straden and Priesten were successively carried by the division Philippon, which had just come up; but the latter village was shortly after retaken; and after being three times lost and won at the point of the bayonet, finally remained in the hands of the Russians.

49. Heroic resistance of the Russian Guards.

The weight of the French attack, however, was directed against the Russian left; and Ostermann, seeing this, brought up three regiments of the Russian Guards to the menaced point — the Bonnet d'Or, Preobazinsky, and Simonefsky grenadiers; and the heroic resistance of these incomparable troops, the flower and pride of the Russian army, opposed a wall of steel to the French, which all the efforts of the assailants were unable to pass. In vain the French batteries were advanced to within pistol-shot, and sent a storm of grape through the Russian lines; in vain company after company was swept away by the terrific discharges of their musketry; these heroic troops stood firm, constantly closing to the centre as their ranks were thinned. They found there the Russian Thermopylæ, and the greater part of them perished where they stood; but, like the three hundred Spartans under Leonidas, they decided the fate of the world by their blood.* A strong French column in the evening advanced against Priesten, carried it by assault, and moved on to attack the grand Russian battery in the centre; but the heroism of the Guards had gained the requisite time. General Diebitch and the Grand-duke Constantine at this moment arrived with the cavalry and some grenadiers of the Russian Guard, with which this menacing column was stopped; and Vandamme, seeing that the Russians were now receiving considerable reinforcements, drew off for the night to the ground he occupied before the action.[1]

[1] Kausler, 654, 656. Bout. 40, 41. Jom. iv. 399. Lond. 123, 124. Fain, ii. 314, 315. Grosse Chron. ii. 14, 20.

Prudence now counselled a retreat to the French

* "C'est sans triompher que le nombre l'accable,
Et sa mâle Vigueur toujours en même point,
Succombe sous la force, et ne lui cède point."
CORNEILLE, *Cinna*, Act iv. scene 1.

general; for the superiority which he had on the first day was at length turned the other way; and the increasing force of the enemy, who were seen issuing at all the passes from the mountains, threatened not only to expose him to ruinous odds, but might even entirely overwhelm his corps. He had been promised support, however, by Napoleon, and distinctly ordered to advance to Töplitz; the Young Guard, eight-and-twenty thousand strong, was only a few hours' march in the rear; and he never for a moment conceived it possible that, having assigned to him the onerous duty of cutting off the retreat of the right wing of the Allied army, that great commander would leave him unsupported in the perilous attempt.* The marshal's baton danced before his eyes: instances were frequent, in the earlier history of the revolutionary wars, of a similar act of daring being attended with the most glorious results; in war, as in love, he who nothing ventures will nothing win. Influenced by these considerations, to which the native resolution of his character gave additional weight, he resolved to maintain his ground, and disposing his corps, now reduced by the losses of the preceding days to twenty-three thousand men, in the best order, he awaited the approach of the Allies in the neighbourhood of Culm.[1]

50. Vandamme remains firm on the next day.

[1] Fain, ii. 315. Jom. iv. 400, 401. St-Cyr, iv. 128, 129.

The hourly increasing numbers of the enemy now gave them an opportunity, of which they skilfully availed themselves, of crushing the audacious invader who had thus broken into their rear in the hope of receiving the sword of the conquered. Their dispositions were speedily made. Vandamme had taken post on the heights in front of Culm, looking towards Töplitz, his right resting on the foot of the mountains—his centre crossing the great road leading to Töplitz—his left in the plain, as far as the hamlet of Zigeley. This was the weak point of his line, as the

51. Dispositions of the Russians to attack him. Aug. 30.

* Vandamme received, on the night of the 29th, a distinct order from Berthier to push on to Töplitz; it was brought to him by a colonel of the Swiss état-major.—Jomini, iv. 401, note.

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ground afforded no natural advantages; and the Allied generals therefore resolved to overwhelm it with superior forces, and drive both it and the centre up against the mountains, where escape, at least for the artillery and carriages, would be impossible. With this view, Barclay de Tolly, who had now assumed the command, as well from his rank as in consequence of the wound of Ostermann, who had lost an arm on the preceding day, directed the Russians under Raeffskoi to attack on the left; while the right, composed of twenty squadrons of Russian cavalry, under the orders of Prince Gallitzin, and the Austrian corps of Colloredo, with the division Bianchi in reserve, was destined to make the decisive onset on the French left, which was unsupported in the plain. A screen of Russian light and heavy horse stretched across the chaussée, with a powerful artillery, and united the right and left wings. The total force thus brought to bear against Vandamme was little short of sixty thousand men, of whom ten thousand were admirable horse.[1]

[1] Bout. 42. Lond. 126, 127. Lab. i. 333. Vaud. i. 160. Jom. iv. 401, 402.

52. Second battle of Culm.

The battle began by a vigorous charge of the Russian cavalry on the flank of the French left in the plain, which being outflanked, and turned at the same time that Colloredo's corps advanced against its front, was speedily thrown into confusion, and driven up against the centre, in front of Culm. Steadily the Austrians moved directly towards that town, while the French left, now entirely broken, and pushed on by the cavalry in flank, was dispersed over the plain like chaff before the wind. Vandamme, now seriously alarmed, despatched a fresh brigade to stop the progress of the enemy on the left; but they too were overwhelmed in the confusion, and the Allied horse, sweeping round their rear, had already approached the village of Arbesau, not far distant from the great road to Pirna. At the same time a sharp conflict was going on on the right, and the Russians were gradually gaining ground on their adversaries posted on the slopes of the mountains. Matters were in this critical state when a

loud fire of musketry, followed by several explosions, was heard on the summit of the pass, towards Nollendorf, directly in the rear of the French column, and on the only line by which they could escape. Joy at first illuminated every countenance in the French ranks, for no one doubted that it was the Young Guard pushed on from Pirna to their support, which would speedily re-establish the fortunes of the day. But this satisfaction was of short duration, and was converted into corresponding consternation when the Prussian standards were seen on the summits; and the news circulated through the ranks, that it was Kleist with eighteen thousand Prussians who thus lay directly on their only line of retreat. In effect, the Prussian general, who had been directed to retire by Schönwald and Nollendorf, and had the evening before received orders from Alexander to descend upon the right flank of the French towards Graupen, finding the road which he followed insupportably bad, had made his way across to the great chaussée, and had just seized and blown up some French caissons at the top of the pass.[1]

[1] Kausler, 658. Jom. iv. 401, 402. Bout. 43. Fain, ii. 316, 317. St-Cyr, iv. 129. Grosse Chron. i. 38, 42.

53. Appearance of Kleist, and total defeat of the French.

And now a scene ensued, unparalleled even in the varied annals of the revolutionary war. Vandamme, seeing his danger, drew off his troops from the heights on the right in front of Culm, and, rallying as well as he could the broken remains of his left, formed his whole force into a column, the cavalry in front, under Corbineau, the artillery in the centre, and the infantry on the flanks and rear. Having made these dispositions, which were the best that circumstances would admit, he began his retreat, and got through Culm in safety. But in the little plain beyond, extending to the foot of the gorge of Tellnitz, the Russian and Austrian horse precipitated themselves on all sides upon the retreating mass, while a formidable array of artillery, by incessant discharges, threw its rear into confusion. Disorder was already spreading rapidly in the ranks, and Vandamme had resolved to sacrifice his guns to save his men, when, to complete their misfortunes, the

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advanced guard reported that the defile which they must immediately ascend was occupied in strength by a Prussian corps! Despair immediately seized the troops; all order and command were lost. Corbineau, at the head of the horse, dashed up the pass with such vigour, that though the ascent was so steep that in ordinary circumstances they could hardly have ascended at the gentlest trot, he pushed right through the Prussian column at the gallop, cut down their gunners, and seized their artillery,—which, however, he could not carry away,—and got clear through.[1]

[1] Jom. iv, 402. Bout. 44. Fain, ii. 319. Vaud. i. 161. Sir R. Wilson, 44, note. Die Grosse Chron. i. 466, 469.

54. Dreadful struggle in the defile of Tellnitz.

The Prussians now imagined that they were themselves cut off, and at the point of ruin; and their whole infantry, breaking their ranks, rushed like a foaming torrent headlong down the defile, to force their way through the barrier which seemed to oppose their retreat into Bohemia at its foot. In the middle of the gorge they met the French column, in similar disorder and impelled by the same apprehensions, which was struggling for life and death to get up, with the Russians thundering in their rear! A scene of indescribable horror ensued. Close pent in a steep and narrow pass, between overhanging scaurs and rocks, nearly thirty thousand men on the two sides, animated with the most vehement passions, alike brave and desperate, contended elbow against elbow, knee against knee, breast against breast, bayonet against bayonet, mutually to force their way through each other's throng.* In the confusion Kleist was seized by the French, but speedily delivered; Vandamme was made

* "Οἱ γὰρ ἄριστοι
Κρινθέντες Τρῶάς τε καὶ Ἕκτορα δῖον ἔμιμνον,
Φράξαντες δόρυ δουρὶ, σάκος σάκεϊ προθελύμνῳ·
Ἀσπὶς ἄρ' ἀσπίδ' ἔρειδε, κόρυς κόρυν, ἀνέρα δ' ἀνήρ·
Ψαῦον δ' ἱππόκομοι κόρυθες λαμπροῖσι φάλοισιν
Νευόντων· ὡς πυκνοὶ ἐφέστασαν ἀλλήλοισιν·
Ἔγχεα δ' ἐπτύσσοντο ϑρασειάων ἀπὸ χειρῶν
Σειόμεν· οἱ δ' ἰθὺς φρόνεον, μέμασαν δὲ μάχεσθαι."
*Iliad*, N, 128.

prisoner and finally retained by the Prussians. The remainder of his corps, who were crushed through or out of the defile, immediately dispersed through the neighbouring woods and wilds ; and, throwing away their arms, made the best of their way over the mountains to Peterswalde, where they were received and re-armed by St-Cyr's corps.* Nearly twelve thousand men, including Corbineau's cavalry, escaped in this manner, though in woful plight, and totally ruined as a military force ; but the whole remainder of the corps, including both Vandamme's and Haxo's men, were either killed or made prisoners. The latter amounted to seven thousand ; and sixty pieces of cannon, two eagles, and three hundred ammunition waggons were taken. The total loss of the French in the two days was not less than eighteen thousand men, while that of the Allies in the same period did not exceed five thousand.[1]†

[1] St-Cyr to Berthier, Aug. 31, 1813. St-Cyr, iv. 389. Bout. 44, 45. Jom. iv. 402, 403. Fain, ii. 318, 319. Sir R. Wilson, 43. Grosse Chron. i. 467, 468.

55. Napoleon's views at this period for an attack on Berlin.

On the morning of the 30th, thus fraught with disaster to Napoleon, he was with great complacency surveying the different positions of his corps on the map, and anticipating the brilliant accounts he was so soon to receive of the operations of Vandamme in rear of the enemy.

* "Generals Philippon and Duvernet are occupied in rallying what remains of their troops; their number, they think, exceeds ten thousand. We are furnishing them with cartridges and cannon ; in fine, we would put them in a respectable situation, if they can only succeed in recovering their spirits."—ST-CYR *to* BERTHIER, 31*st August* 1813; ST-CYR, iv. 389.

† Of this number, no less than 3200 were killed and wounded in the Russian imperial guard, whose numbers at going into the battle did not exceed 8000 men, cavalry included. The great loss sustained by so small a body of men, being fully half of the infantry who were seriously engaged, is a decisive proof, when they were not broken, of the extreme severity of the action, and the gallantry of their resistance. This action deserves to be borne in mind as the most desperate and glorious engagement of any body of the Russian or German troops during the war, and it is to be ranked beside the heroism of the British at Albuera, where, out of 7500 English engaged, the loss was 4300. It must be observed, however, that nearly half of the English loss was occasioned by the surprise of the Polish lancers, which cut off nearly three entire battalions ; so that the amount of the respective loss is not in these instances an exact test of the comparative heroism of those worthy rivals in arms.—See LONDONDERRY, 124, 125, for the Russian loss at Culm ; and *ante*, Chap. LXVI. § 49, for that of the British at Albuera.

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"At this moment," said he to Berthier, "Marmont and St-Cyr must have driven the Austrian rearguards on Töplitz; they will there receive the last ransom of the enemy. We cannot be long of hearing news of Vandamme; and we shall then know what advantages he has been able to derive from his fine position. It is by him that we shall finish in that quarter. We will leave some corps of observation, and recall the rest to head-quarters. I calculate that, after the disasters experienced at Dresden, it will take at least three weeks for the army of Schwartzenberg to reorganise itself, and again take the field. It will not require so much time to execute my projected movement on Berlin." Such were Napoleon's views on the morning of that eventful day, and the forenoon was spent in making arrangements for his favourite design of marching on Berlin, which was at once to demonstrate the reality of his victory, and again spread the terror of his arms through the whole north of Germany.[1]

[1] Fain, 312, 313.

56. Manner in which he received the account of the disaster at Culm.

In the afternoon of the same day, the most alarming news began to spread from the side of Pirna. It was rumoured that a great disaster had been sustained beyond the mountains; it was even said that Vandamme's corps had been totally destroyed. Soon the frequent arrival of breathless and disordered horsemen confirmed the dismal intelligence; and at length Corbineau himself, wounded and covered with blood, made his way to the Emperor, still armed with the Prussian sabre which, in the *mêlée*, he had exchanged for his own. From him Napoleon heard authentic details of the extent of the calamity; and he learned with grief, that not only the grand Allied Army was saved, but that it would bear back to Prague the trophies of a victory. Napoleon received the details of the disaster coldly, and said—"To a flying enemy you must either open a bridge of gold or oppose a barrier of steel. Vandamme, it appears, could not oppose that barrier of steel." Then, turning to Berthier, he said,

"Can we have written anything which could have inspired him with the fatal idea of descending into the plain of Bohemia? Fain, look over the order-book." Nothing, however, it is said, was discovered to warrant the descent from Peterswalde. "Well," said he to Maret, "this is war! High in the morning—low enough at night. From a triumph to a fall is often but a step." Then, taking the compasses in his hand, he mused long on the map, repeating unconsciously the lines of Voltaire, which he was frequently in the habit of quoting,—[1]

[1] Fain, ii. 320, 321.

> "J'ai servi, commandé, vaincu, quarante années;
> Du monde entre mes mains j'ai vu les destinées,
> Et j'ai toujours connu qu'en chaque événement,
> Le destin des états dépendait d'un moment." *

57. Reflections on the real causes of Vandamme's disaster.

But, in truth, without disputing the incalculable influence of a few hours, or even minutes, on the fate of nations during war, nothing is more certain than that, in this instance, the misfortunes of Napoleon were owing to himself; and that the attempt which he made, according to his usual custom, to throw the blame upon others, was as unjust as it was ungenerous. He maintained stoutly in writing, as well as speaking, thinking that Vandamme was killed, that he had given him positive orders to intrench himself on the summit of the mountains, and not descend into the gulf at their feet;† and yet, only two days before, Berthier, by his orders, had enjoined him "to march directly upon Töplitz;"‡ and on the very

* *La Mort de César*, Act i. scene 1.

† "That unhappy Vandamme, who seems to have been killed, had not left a single sentinel on the mountains, nor any reserve in any quarter; he engulfed himself in a hollow, without feeling his way in any manner. If he had only left four battalions and four pieces of cannon on the heights in reserve, that disaster would not have occurred. I had given him *positive orders to intrench himself on the heights, and encamp his corps there*, and send down into Bohemia nothing but parties to disquiet the enemy, and obtain news."—NAPOLEON *to* ST-CYR, 1*st September* 1813; ST-CYR, iv. 392.

‡ "*March direct to Töplitz; you will cover yourself with glory.*"—BERTHIER *to* VANDAMME, 29*th August* 1813.—"Three or four hours only were required to retreat to Nollendorf, where he would have been in an impregnable position; but Vandamme conceived he was not at liberty, after this positive order, to effect that movement. What would he have said to Napoleon, if, on his retreat,

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day on which the disaster occurred, (30th August,) Berthier had written to St-Cyr, informing him of Vandamme's success on the first day against Ostermann, from which he anticipated the most glorious results.* In fact, Napoleon himself admitted, in conversation with St-Cyr, that he should have moved forward the Young Guard from Pirna to support Vandamme;† in which case not only would no disaster at all have been incurred, but the movement on Töplitz, which was ably conceived, would have led to the destruction of Kleist's corps, and the disorganisation of the whole right wing of the Allied army. Decisive success was within his grasp, when he neglected to seize it, and permitted the advantage to pass over to the enemy, by retaining his Young Guard inactive at Pirna, during the two most vital days of the campaign.[1]

[1] Grosse Chron. i. 473. Fain, ii. 293. Richter, ii. § 91.

53. Failure of all attempts to exculpate Napoleon on this point.

His panegyrists endeavour to account for this neglect, by observing that he was seized with vomiting at Pirna, and obliged to return to Dresden in great pain on the afternoon of the 28th. But, admitting this to have been true, it is no reason why he should not have advanced Mortier with the Young Guard to support a corps charged with so perilous and momentous a mission as that of stopping the retreat of a hundred thousand men. No man knew better than he did what risk is incurred in striving to obstruct the retreat of a large army; his own success on the Beresina must have been fresh in his recol-

he had met him at Nollendorf, as he had been led to expect would be the case, and the enemy meanwhile, resuming his ground at Culm, had secured the retreat of the Grand Army?"—*Victoires et Conquêtes*, xxii. 5, note.

* "I have received your letter of the 6th, from Reinhard Grimme, in which you describe your position behind the 6th corps, [Marmont.] The intention of his Majesty is, that you support the 6th corps: but it is desirable that you should select for that purpose a road to the left, between the Duke of Ragusa and the corps of *General Vandamme*, who has obtained great success over the enemy, and made two thousand prisoners."—BERTHIER *to* ST-CYR, *30th August* 1813; ST-CYR, iv. 388.

† "The Emperor admitted to me, in conversation on the 7th September, that if he had not halted his Guard at Pirna on the 28th, but, on the contrary, followed it up on the traces of Vandamme, he would have found a great opportunity of striking a blow in the neighbourhood of Töplitz."—ST-CYR, iv. 137, 138.

lection. Even on the night of the 29th it would have been time enough to have moved up the Young Guard; for they required only a few hours to march from Pirna to Peterswalde.* The truth was, that Vandamme neither disobeyed orders, nor was forgotten: he acted strictly according to his instructions, and was fully present to the Emperor's mind, who watched his march with the utmost anxiety. But Napoleon judged of present events by the past. He conceived that the apparition of thirty thousand men in their rear, immediately after a severe defeat in front, would paralyse and discomfit the Allies as completely as it had done in the days of Rivoli and Ulm; and he was unwilling to engage the Young Guard in the mountains, as it might ere long be required for his own projected march upon Berlin. He forgot that his conscripts were not the soldiers of Austerlitz and Jena; that the Russian Guards were not the Austrians of 1796; and that Ostermann was neither Alvinzi nor Mack.†

While these momentous events were going forward in the neighbourhood of Dresden, and in the Bohemian valleys, events of scarcely less importance were in pro-

* "On the 29th, in the evening, the Emperor must have known that Vandamme had fought the whole day, against not only the forces of Ostermann, but those which Barclay had brought up. He had, therefore, the whole of that night to make his dispositions, which a man such as he could easily have done in an hour; and if he conceived the position of Vandamme hazardous, as unquestionably it was, he had time to draw his corps back, or support it by his Guard. The latter corps could have marched to Nollendorf or Peterswalde in a few hours; that is, before Kleist's Prussians, who were encamped on the night of the 29th at Fürstenwalde, had come up."—St-Cyr, iv. 129.

† "Vandamme's defeat was a double misfortune; for it was to be ascribed to an evident oblivion of the first principles of war, which prescribe the pursuit to extremity of a beaten enemy. Napoleon should unquestionably have pursued, *à l'outrance*, the defeated army of the Allied sovereigns. There was the vital point of the war; all the rest was merely secondary, and could have been repaired. There also was the greatest chance of disorder, from the number of chiefs who commanded the different corps. If he had quitted Pirna to flee to the succour of Macdonald, routed on the Katzbach, the proceeding would have been at least intelligible, but he did not then know of it; and his return to Dresden, having no other object but to prepare the march upon Berlin, was one of the greatest faults of his whole career. Independent of its cutting short the fruits of victory, it became the principal cause of Vandamme's defeat."—Jomini, *Vie de Napoleon*, iv. 403, 404.

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59. Operations in Silesia at this period. Napoleon's instructions to Macdonald, and his movements.

gress among the ravines of Upper Silesia, and on the sandy plains in front of Berlin. Napoleon, on leaving the command of the army of Silesia to Macdonald, had given that general instructions of the most judicious description, and which, if duly followed out, would have probably prevented the dreadful disaster which he experienced. They were to "concentrate his troops and march towards the enemy, so as to be in a situation to give his aid to the operations of the Grand Army against Dresden or Bohemia; but, if attacked by superior forces, to retire behind the Queis and hold Görlitz; and if hard pressed, and the Emperor was far advanced in his attack, by Zittau, upon Prague, to retire to the intrenched camp at Dresden: keeping in view that his principal care should be to preserve his communication with him." Instead of following this judicious direction, Macdonald, who was inspired with that unfounded contempt for his adversaries which so often proved fatal to the lieutenants of Napoleon, no sooner found himself, after the departure of the Emperor to Dresden on the morning of the 24th,[1] at the head of three corps and a division of cavalry, numbering eighty thousand combatants, than he broke up early on the 26th to attack the enemy. In place of following up the Emperor's instructions, being impressed with the belief that the enemy was continuing his retreat in the direction of Breslau, and that he had nothing to do but follow upon his traces, he divided his troops, for the facility of marching and getting supplies, into five columns, spread out over a front twenty-four miles in breadth, from Schönau to Liegnitz. In this straggling manner they were to cross the Katzbach and advance towards Jauer; the right wing under Lauriston, moving by Schönau and the foot of the mountains; the centre, under Macdonald in person, by the Wüthende-Neisse on Weinberg; while the left, led by Sebastiani and Souham, in the absence of Ney, who had been despatched to command the army destined to act against Berlin,[2] was to move by Liegnitz

[1] *Ante*, ch. lxxx. § 21.

Aug. 26.

[2] Jom. iv. 373, 410. Vict. et Conq. 80, 81. Vaud. i. 145.

to pass the KATZBACH there, and fall on the right of the enemy.

60. Simultaneous advance of Blucher against Macdonald.

By a singular coincidence, Blucher, having rested his troops in their position in front of Jauer on the 24th and 25th, and being informed of the departure of the Emperor for Dresden on the morning of the first of these days, which the halt of his advanced guard on the Katzbach entirely confirmed, had on the very same day broken up from his ground to resume the offensive. He kept his troops, however, much more in hand, and was better qualified in consequence to take advantage of any omission on the part of his adversaries, or guard against disaster on his own side. He directed his three corps to pass the Katzbach between Goldberg and Liegnitz; York and Sacken on the right, towards the latter place, directing their attack against Ney's corps; and Langeron on the left, on the side of Goldberg, moving towards Lauriston and Macdonald. At two o'clock in the afternoon, the troops were so far advanced that the enemy were in sight, and Blucher made his dispositions for a general attack.[1]

[1] Grosse Chron. i. 474, 480. Schoell, iv. 361, 362. Bout. 14, 15. Vaud. i. 145. Plotho, ii. 87.

61. Blucher's dispositions to attack the enemy.

The better to conceal his movements from the enemy, and confirm them in the illusion under which they laboured, that the Allies were flying before them, he concealed his troops behind some eminences which lay in their front, on the plateau of Eichholz, and awaited the movements of his opponents. A heavy rain, accompanied with thick mist, which had fallen the whole day, contributed to conceal the movements of the opposite armies from each other; and it was only some Prussian batteries placed on the top of the eminences, which, by the vivacity of their fire, made the French suspect that any considerable body of the enemy were in their way, and that a general engagement might be expected. Macdonald immediately gave orders for his columns to deploy at all points between Weinberg and Klein Tintz;[2] but it required a long time for the orders to be conveyed along

[2] Blucher's Official Account, Schoell, Recueil, iv. 361, 362. Lab. i. 327. Bout. 14, 15. Vaud. i. 145. Plotho, ii. 87, 88.

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so extensive a line; and Blucher, seeing that the enemy had only partially crossed the ravine of the Neisse, so that the troops which had got through were in a great measure unsupported, and judging the opportunity favourable, and the enemy unprepared, gave the signal for attack.

62. Battle of the Katzbach.

Atlas, Plate 86.

Macdonald's right, so far as hitherto come up, when thus unexpectedly assailed, was supported by the rocky banks of the Wüthende-Neisse; but his left was in an elevated plain beyond that river, which its rear columns were still crossing, wholly uncovered except by the cavalry under Sebastiani, the squadrons of which were at that moment engaged in passing the defile. Blucher, perceiving the weak point of his adversary's line, detached Wassilchikoff, at the head of the cavalry of Sacken's

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corps, to charge the French horse which had mounted upon the plateau, and so uncover their left. This order was immediately executed, and with the happiest effect. The Russian cavalry, superior in number, and greatly more experienced, approached the French dragoons on the extreme left, both in front and flank; while Karpoff's Cossacks, who had been sent round by a long detour, were to threaten their rear in the middle of the action. Sebastiani's horse, little prepared for the danger, had to struggle through the narrow defile of Kroitsch at Nieder Crain, already encumbered with the whole artillery of Ney's corps, which was passing it at the time. The consequence was, that the squadrons arrived successively on the plateau on the other side, where they were immediately charged by a formidable body of horse, four thousand strong, in close array, both in front and flank. Unable to resist the shock, the French dragoons were driven back headlong into the defile in their rear, from which they had just emerged; and two brigades of infantry, which were brought up to support them, shared the same fate.[1] Sacken's main body now came up, and, as the incessant rain prevented the muskets going off, charged with loud hurrahs with the

[1] Kausler, 639, 640. Bout. 14, 15. Sacken's Official Account, Schoell's Recueil, iii. 80, 81. Jom. iv. 411, 412. Plotho, ii. 89, 90.

bayonet against the unprotected infantry of Ney's corps, which broke, and was driven headlong over the precipices into the roaring Katzbach and Wüthende-Neisse, where vast numbers were drowned.* The guns, still entangled in the defile to the number of twenty-six, with their whole ammunition waggons, were taken, and fifteen hundred prisoners on this wing fell into the enemy's hands.

63. Defeat of Souham on the French left.

To complete their misfortunes, Souham, who was marching towards Liegnitz, still further to the French left, hearing the violent cannonade to his right, turned aside, and, moving in its direction, arrived at the mouth of the defile of Nieder Crain at six o'clock. This movement, ably conceived, and in the true military spirit, would in ordinary circumstances have probably restored the battle, by throwing a fresh division into the scale when the Allies were disordered by success. As matters stood, however, it only aggravated the disaster. Souham's men arrived at the edge of the ravine of Kroitsch, just as Sebastiani's horse were beginning to break on the plateau opposite. Uniting them to Sebastiani's cuirassiers, which were left in reserve, Souham immediately led his men down the defile, and hastened to ascend the front, in hopes of reaching the opposite plateau in time to arrest the disorder. But just as they began to mount the gorge on the opposite side of the glen, they met the torrent of fugitives from the other side, who were hurrying down, with the bloody Russian and Prussian sabres glancing in their rear. The confusion now became inextricable. The dense and ardent columns pressing up, were for the most part overwhelmed by the disordered mass of horse and foot, mixed together, which was driven headlong down; and such of the battalions and squadrons as succeeded in forcing their way through the throng,[1] and reached the

[1] Jom. iv. 412, 413. Kausler, 640, 641. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 82, 83. Grosse Chron. i. 479, 481.

* The name "*Wüthende*-Neisse," (mad or furious Neisse,) indicates with what a raging torrent that stream, at ordinary seasons insignificant, and fordable in every part, descends during floods from the Bohemian mountains.

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summit, were speedily swept away and driven back into the gulf when attempting to deploy, by the impetuous charges of a victorious and superior enemy, now firmly established on the summit, who with loud hurrahs asserted the triumph of Germany.

64. Continuation of the battle on the right and centre.

While this decisive success was in the course of being gained on the Allied right, their left, under Langeron, had also come into collision with the French right, under Lauriston, near Hennersdorf. The combat there was more equal, and very obstinate: both sides stood their ground with great resolution; but, towards night, the French general having learned the disaster on his left, fell back, still, however, in good order, toward Prausnitz. The action seemed over for the day, when an accidental circumstance renewed it, and augmented the losses of the French general. At nine at night, two fresh divisions of Ney's corps, now under the orders of Souham, having come up, Macdonald in haste crossed them over the Katzbach, at the ford of Schmogwitz, below the confluence of the Neisse, and directed them against the extreme right of Sacken's corps, now advanced to the very edge of the plateau, and engaged in driving the other division and Sebastiani's horse into the flooded torrents at the foot of the precipitous banks. These divisions were under the command of General Tarayre; they brought with them sixteen pieces of cannon, and ascended to the top of the plateau with a good countenance. Sacken, however, who had received intelligence of their approach, was on his guard: his troops were readily made to front to the right, and these fresh divisions were forced by Count Lieven and General Neweroffski again over the Katzbach, with considerable loss.[1]

[1] Sacken's Official Account, Schoell, Rec. iii. 81. Bout. 16. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 83. Jom. iv. 412, 413. Grosse Chron. i. 482, 490.

65. Great successes of the Allies on the following day.

Next day, Blucher early put his columns in motion to follow up his successes; while Macdonald, in great consternation, drew back his shattered bands towards Goldberg. It would seem, however, as if the elements had conspired with the forces of the enemy to accomplish his

destruction. The floodgates of Heaven seemed literally opened the whole night; the rain fell without an instant's intermission in tremendous torrents; and next morning, not only were the raging waters of the Neisse and the Katzbach unfordable at any point, but several of the bridges over those streams, as well as over the Bober, which also lay farther back in the line of the French retreat, were swept away by the floods which descended from the chain of the Riesengebirge. Lauriston, sorely pressed by Langeron, only succeeded in getting across the foaming torrents by the sacrifice of two-and-twenty pieces of cannon, his whole ammunition waggons, and two thousand prisoners. On the same day the Allies occupied Goldberg, and, continuing the pursuit, on the day following crossed the Katzbach, and drove the enemy back at all points towards the Bober. All the bridges over that river had been swept away except that at Buntzlau; and of necessity the whole French divisions were directed to that point. In the course of the rapid retreat thither, forty pieces of cannon, and several hundred ammunition waggons were sacrificed, and fell into the enemy's hands.[1]

Aug. 27.

Aug. 28.

[1] Vict. et Conq. xxii. 83. Jom. iv. 414, 415. Bout. 16, 17. Plotho, ii. 90, 94.

66. Disaster of Puthod's division. Aug. 29.

Atlas, Plate 85.

A still more serious disaster, however, awaited the French in the course of this calamitous retreat. The division Puthod of Lauriston's corps had been despatched on the 26th, by a circuit at the foot of the mountains by Schönau and Jauer, in order to menace the rear of the Allies, and harass the retreat which was deemed on their part inevitable. He was already far advanced on his journey, when news of the disaster on the Katzbach arrived; and he at once felt the necessity of hastening to regain the main body of the army. Overlooked by the Allies in the first heat of the pursuit, Puthod succeeded without any great difficulty in retiring during the 27th; but, on arriving at the Bober, he found the bridge at Hirschberg swept away by the floods, and he was obliged to come down the right bank of the torrent to endeavour

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to effect a passage. Next morning, he got as far down as Löwenberg, but there too the bridge was destroyed; and after several vain attempts to re-establish it, he was obliged to wind his toilsome and devious way, anxiously looking out for a passage, towards Buntzlau. In doing so, ill-luck made him fall in with the advanced posts of Langeron's corps, who, wholly unsuspicious of his arrival, were pursuing their opponents towards the Bober. The Russian general immediately collected his forces, and made dispositions for an attack.[1]

[1] Schoell, ii. 83, 84. Vaud. i. 147. Jom. iv. 414, 415. Richter, i. 385, 386. Plotho, ii. 118.

67. Which is surrounded and compelled to surrender.

General Korff, with his own horse and Czorbatoff's infantry, was despatched so as to cut off the retreat of the French back again up the Bober, which they seemed at first disposed to attempt; while Rudziwicz was posted on the road to Buntzlau, so as to render all escape impossible. Surrounded in this manner by greatly superior forces, in the most frightful of all positions, with a roaring impassable torrent in his rear, the brave Frenchman did not despair, but taking ground on the hill of Plagwitz, nearly opposite to Löwenberg, prepared to resist to the last extremity. There he was speedily assailed on every side; Rudziwicz attacked him on one flank, while Czorbatoff and Korff charged him on the other, and a powerful train of artillery opened upon his columns in front. Shaken by such an accumulation of force, as well as by the evident hopelessness of their situation, the French broke, and fled in wild confusion down the hill towards the river; on the banks of which they were, with the exception of a few who swam across the foaming torrent, made prisoners. Nearly two thousand were slain or drowned. A hundred officers, including Puthod himself, and his whole staff, three thousand private soldiers, two eagles, and twelve pieces of cannon, with the whole park of the division, fell into the enemy's hands, who did not lose a hundred men.[2]

[2] Langeron's Official Accounts, Schoell, ii. 83, 84. Bout. 17, 18. Jom. iv. 414, 415. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 84. Vaud. i. 147, 148. Richter, i. 385, 386.

Such was the great battle of the Katzbach; the counterpart to that of Hohenlinden, and one of the most

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glorious ever gained in the annals of European fame. Its trophies were immense, and coincided almost exactly with those which had, twelve years before, attended the triumph of Moreau.[1] Eighteen thousand prisoners, a hundred and three pieces of cannon, and two hundred and thirty caissons, besides seven thousand killed and wounded, presented a total loss to the French of twenty-five thousand men.* When Macdonald re-formed his broken bands behind the Queis, he could with difficulty collect forty-eight thousand around his standards instead of seventy-three thousand, who, when he received the command from Napoleon, on the latter's setting out for Dresden, crowded the banks of the Bober. The loss of the Allies was very trifling, considering the magnitude of the success gained: it did not exceed four thousand men. Indeed, there was scarcely any serious fighting; the French having been surprised by Blucher's attack when wholly unprepared for it, and subsequently prevented, by the dreadful weather and the destruction of the bridges in their rear by the floods, from reuniting their broken bands, or forming any regular mass for resistance to the enemy.[2]

68. Results of the battle.

[1] *Ante*, ch. xxxii. § 53.

[2] Vict. et Conq. xxii. 84. Bout. 19. Jom. iv. 19. Vaud. i. 148. Grosse Chron. i. 503.

Great as were the successes thus achieved by the army of Silesia, and deservedly as they have given immortality to the name of Marshal Blucher, it may be doubted whether he would not more completely have succeeded in his object of disorganising the French army, if, instead of directing the weight of his forces against the enemy's left, he had thrown it against their right wing, placed at Goldberg. It was by that town that the whole French communications were preserved, and consequently a reverse there would have cut off Souham and the French left, and paralysed the whole army. On the other hand, when the line of operation on the French right was taken, it must be admitted that the Prussian general showed

69. Reflections on the conduct of the generals on both sides.

* "La bataille de la Katzbach et ses suites nous coutèrent dix mille hommes tués ou blessés, et quinze mille prisonniers."—BIGNON, xii. 313.

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admirable skill in the selection of his ground for the principal attack, where a precipitous glen in the rear of the French rendered retreat on their part impossible ; in the concealment of his own troops till half the enemy were past the ravine ; and in then falling on the portion which was drawn up on the plateau, with such a concentration of infantry and cavalry as at once rendered resistance hopeless, and assistance through the narrow gorge impossible. The movements of the French general will not admit of a similar apology. In direct violation of the instructions of Napoleon—which were to concentrate his troops and decline battle except with a superiority of force—he rashly advanced against an enterprising general at the head of an army superior both in number and in warlike experience to his own. His troops were so scattered over a line from Liegnitz to Schönau, nearly twenty-four miles in length, that, when assailed in his centre and left on the most critical ground by the concentrated masses of the enemy, he had no adequate force at hand to arrest the disaster consequent on their first successful onset. Nor was the management of his principal force less injudicious than its direction. By directing the bulk of his troops on the great road from Goldberg to Jauer, Macdonald would at once have menaced his opponent's communications, covered his own, and secured to himself a comparatively safe retreat in case of disaster ; whereas, by accumulating them on the left, he both uncovered his vital line, left untouched that of his adversary, and got his troops entangled in the rugged ravines of the Katzbach and Wüthende-Neisse, where any check was the certain prelude to ruin.[1]

[1] Vict. et Conq. xxii. 85, 86. Bout. 20, 24.

While these important operations were going forward in Saxony, Bohemia, and Silesia, the campaign had also been opened, and an important blow struck to the north of the Elbe, in the direction of Berlin. Although nothing is more certain than that the vital quarter of the war was to be found on the Bohemian or Silesian frontier, where

70. Operations against Bernadotte; and Napoleon's great anxiety for success over him.

the great masses of the Allies were concentrated, yet it was by no means in that direction that Napoleon was desirous to begin hostilities, or most anxious to obtain success. He was much more intent upon making himself master of Berlin; it was to clear his flank of Blucher, before engaging in that enterprise, that he opened the campaign by the march into Silesia. The first question which he asked when he returned to Dresden, beset by the Allied grand army, was, whether there was any news from Berlin; and it was to prosecute that favourite design that he made the fatal stop of the Young Guard at Pirna, and returned himself to Dresden, in the midst of the pursuit of Schwartzenberg's army. Napoleon, however, in his anxiety to dazzle the world by the capture of the Prussian capital, and to gratify his private pique by the defeat of Bernadotte, committed an extraordinary oversight in the estimate which he formed of the strength of the enemy to whom he was opposed in that quarter. He conceived that the Prince-Royal had only eighty-five thousand men in all under his command, including those who, under Walmoden, were opposed to Davoust at Hamburg; whereas, such had been the efforts made to reinforce the army in the north of Germany, and such the enthusiasm with which, under the sense of recent wrongs, they were seconded by the people, that Bernadotte had now ninety thousand effective men under his immediate command, of whom nearly twenty thousand were admirable cavalry, besides above forty thousand who were opposite to Hamburg, or guarded the banks of the Lower Elbe. With this imposing force, he took post at Charlottenburg to cover Berlin, and concentrate his troops as soon as the denunciation of the armistice gave reason to anticipate a resumption of hostilities.[1]

[1] Jom. iv. 405. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 49. Bout. 48. Grosse Chron. i. 516, 520. Plotho, ii. § 52, 63. Appendix.

Meanwhile, Oudinot received orders to march onwards, and open the campaign; but he not being prepared immediately to obey the Emperor's directions, the Prince-Royal advanced his headquarters to Potsdam, and his

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71. Advance of Oudinot, and preparations for a battle. Aug. 21.

numerous army occupied Juterback, Trebbin, and the villages of Saarmund and Belitz. On the 21st, the French army moved forward, consisting of three corps of infantry, viz. Bertrand's, Reynier's, and Oudinot's, with Arrighi's cavalry, mustering in all about eighty thousand men; and, leaving the great road from Torgau to Berlin, made a flank movement towards the Wittenberg road. This speedily brought it in contact with the foremost posts of Bernadotte's army, and a rude conflict ensued with the advanced guard of Bulow's Prussians, which terminated in the forcing of the defile of Thyrow, and the establishment of Oudinot's forces on the heights behind Trebbin, and in front of Mittenwalde. Bernadotte, perceiving a general battle was inevitable to prevent the enemy from making their way to Berlin, immediately gave orders for concentrating his forces, and the greater part of the day following was occupied in bringing them into line. But before they were all assembled, General Thumen, with a body of Prussians, was attacked by Reynier with so great a superiority of force at Trebbin, that he was forced to retire with considerable loss: the enemy carried the defile of Jühnsdorf; and the Prince-Royal, now seriously alarmed for his left, drew back the troops which he had at Trebbin and Mittenwalde, and brought up Tauenzein's whole corps to Blankenfelde. Oudinot's object in thus directing the weight of his forces against the enemy's left, was to beat his forces in detail towards Blankenfelde and Teltow, and force the Prince-Royal, driven up against Potsdam, to throw back his left, and abandon Berlin. With this view, Reynier, in the centre, was directed to march on Gross Beeren; Bertrand, on the right, on Blankenfelde; while the commander-in-chief himself, with the left, moved on Ahrensdorf. He was not now above twelve miles from Berlin, which he fully expected to enter on the following day.[1]

Aug. 22.

[1] Vict. et Conq. xxii. 98, 99. Bernadotte's Official Account, Schoell's Recueil, i. 72, 73. Bout. 50, 51. Jom. iv. 405, 406.

The battle began early on the morning of the 23d, by the French right, under Bertrand, who had the shortest

distance to go over before arriving at the enemy, falling with great vigour on Tauenzein, who with his gallant Prussians held Blankenfelde. Bulow, who was in reserve behind the centre, upon this began to extend his columns to the left to aid his brethren in arms in that quarter. The movement, however, was countermanded by the Prince-Royal; for Tauenzein had made such a vigorous resistance, that not only were Bertrand's attacks repulsed, but several prisoners were taken, and the line was perfectly safe in that direction. Matters, however, wore a more serious aspect in the centre, where Reynier, at the head of twenty-four thousand Saxons, supported by a strong reserve, attacked and carried Gross Beeren, and established himself close to the very middle of the Allied line. Bernadotte, sensible of the dangerous consequences of this success, instantly took the most vigorous measures to arrest it. Bulow's whole corps was stopped in its march to the left, and brought up to the support of the centre, which had retired, still, however, bravely fighting, to some woods in the rear of the village. Meanwhile Reynier, little anticipating a second conflict, and deeming the combat over, was preparing to establish his bivouacs for the night on the ground he had won, when Bulow, at the head of thirty-five thousand Prussians, fell upon him.[1]

72. Battle of Gross Beeren. Aug. 23.

Atlas, Plate 87.

[1] Bernadotte's Official Report, Schoell's Recueil, i. 73. Bout. 52, 53. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 97. Jom. iv. 406, 407. Plotho, ii. 138.

The measures of the Prussian general were taken with great ability, and he was admirably seconded by the intrepidity of his troops. While he himself advanced with the main body of his forces to recover Gross Beeren in front, Borstel, with a strong brigade, was moved on to Klein Beeren, in order to turn the right of the enemy, and the Swedish horse were advanced so as to threaten their left. The troops advanced in two lines, preceded by sixty pieces of cannon, and followed by the cavalry in reserve. Incessant rain had fallen the whole day, which prevented the muskets from going off; but the cannon on both sides soon opened a tremendous fire, while, in

73. Defeat of the French centre.

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rear of the Prussian pieces, their infantry advanced with the precision and coolness of the troops of the great Frederick. At length they arrived within grape-shot range, and Bulow immediately ordered a charge of bayonets by the front line deployed, while the second followed in column. The struggle, though violent, was not of long duration: Reynier, assailed by superior forces in front, could with difficulty maintain his ground: and the attack of Borstel on his right, and the opening of the Swedish cannon, supported by an immense body of Russian horse, on his left, decided the conflict. He was already beginning to retreat, when the Prussians in front, with loud hurrahs, charged with the bayonet. Gross Beeren was speedily won; several batteries were carried; and the Allied horse, by repeated charges on the left flank, completed his defeat. Oudinot's corps, alarmed by the violence of the cannonade at this period, stopped their advance on Ahrensberg, and, hastening to the centre, came up in time to arrest the disorder. Behind these fresh columns the broken Saxons were enabled to re-form; but it was too late to regain the day. The Prussians, indeed, ignorant of the strength of the new army which they had thus encountered in the twilight, retired from the pursuit, and even at the moment evacuated Gross Beeren; but the defeat of the French centre determined the retreat of their left; their whole army retired to Trebbin, while Bulow reoccupied Gross Beeren, and Tauenzein advanced to Jühnsdorf.[1]

[1] Bout. 53, 54. Jom. iv. 407, 408. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 99, 100. Vaud. i. 166, 167. Plotho, ii. 139. Grosse Chron. i. 541, 549.

74. Results of the battle.

Although the battle of Gross Beeren was not attended with such extensive trophies in the field as those of Culm or the Katzbach, yet in its moral influence, and the effects which it ultimately had on the fortunes of the campaign, it was almost equal to either of these memorable conflicts. Fifteen hundred prisoners, thirteen cannon, and a large quantity of baggage, were taken; but these were its most inconsiderable results. The moral influence of the defeat of the attack on Berlin was immense. Great

had been the consternation in that capital when the enemy's columns were advanced almost to within sight of its steeples, and every house shook with the discharges of their cannon. They remembered Jena and six years of bondage, and every heart throbbed with emotion. Proportionally vehement was the joy when news arrived at ten at night that the enemy had been repulsed, that his columns were retiring, and the capital saved; and the general transports were increased by the circumstance, that the triumph was exclusively national—Bulow and Tauenzein having, with their new Prussian levies, almost alone had a share in the action. The warmest thanks were next day voted by the municipality to the Prince-Royal as their deliverer; joy beamed in every countenance; great numbers of the Saxon prisoners, carried away by the torrent of patriotic feeling, petitioned to be allowed to serve in the ranks of the Fatherland, and formed the nucleus of the Saxon corps which soon appeared in the lines of the Allies; while several of the officers, who had served under Bernadotte in the campaign of Wagram, wept for joy at finding themselves again in the patriotic ranks of Germany, and under the banners of their old general.[1]

[1] Bernadotte's Official Account, Schoell, i. 75, 76. Bout. 53, 54. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 100, 101. Richter, i. 415.

75. Subsequent results of the battle.

The battle of Gross Beeren was immediately followed by other successes, naturally flowing from it, which materially augmented its trophies. On the 25th, Bernadotte moved forward, though very slowly and with extreme circumspection: but the enemy were so scattered that he could not fail, with his superiority in cavalry, to gain considerable advantages. Luckau had been fortified by the French, and garrisoned by a thousand men; but the governor, not conceiving himself in sufficient strength to withstand the assault of the Allies, by whom he was soon surrounded, capitulated when summoned, with nine pieces of cannon, and considerable magazines. A still more serious disaster soon after occurred on the side of Magdeburg. Gerard, with his division, five thousand strong, had

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issued from that fortress as soon as he heard of the advance of Oudinot, in order to co-operate in the general movement against Berlin; but the reverse of Gross Beeren, of which, from the hostile feeling of the country, he had received no information, followed by the advance of the Allies, led him, without being aware of it, into the very middle of the enemy's columns. Finding Belzig occupied

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by the Cossacks of Chernicheff, he withdrew to Leibnitz, where he took post to await further orders. There he

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was assailed next day by a division of the Prussians under Hirschfeld; and after a gallant resistance, being attacked in rear by Chernicheff's Cossacks, he was totally defeated, and compelled to take refuge in Magdeburg, with the loss of fourteen hundred prisoners and six pieces of cannon. These advantages made the total trophies of the battle of Gross Beeren four thousand prisoners, besides an equal number killed and wounded, and twenty-eight guns; while the Allies were not weakened by more than half the number. These results, considerable as they were, might have been greatly augmented, if Bernadotte had made a proper use of the superiority of force, and great preponderance in cavalry, which he enjoyed. But he was so cautious in his movements, that though he had no enemy to withstand him in the field, and the French fell back at all points, he took eleven days to advance from Gross Beeren to Rabenstein, near the Elbe, where he established his headquarters on the 4th September, though the distance was little more than fifty English miles.[1]

Sept. 4.

[1] Bout 57, 59. Jom. iv. 408. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 100, 101. Vaud. i. 168, 170. Plotho, ii. 154, 155. Richter, i. 426, 428.

76. Vast effect of these successes of the Allies.

Napoleon was at Dresden when these disastrous tidings from Bohemia, Silesia, and Prussia arrived with stunning rapidity after each other. His whole projects for the campaign, which seemed to be opening in so auspicious a manner by the glorious victory of Dresden, were at once blasted. The moral effect of that great triumph was destroyed. The Allies, instead of retreating to Prague in consternation, brought with them the trophies of Vandamme and a considerable part of his corps as prisoners.

The battle of Culm had turned into cries of joy the desolation which began to be felt in the valleys of Bohemia; the army of Silesia was flying in disorder before its terrible antagonists, and loudly demanding the Emperor and his Guards as the only means of stemming the torrent; the attack on Berlin had failed. Instead of electrifying Europe by the capture of the Prussian capital, the northern army was thrown back to the Elbe, while the Prussian landwehr was singing the pæans of victory, and unheard-of enthusiasm animated the whole north of Germany. Napoleon was strongly affected by these reverses, the more so as they were quite unexpected; and he immediately began, as usual, to lay the whole blame upon his lieutenants.* Circumstances, however, were so pressing, and succours were demanded from so many quarters at once, that it was no easy matter to say to which direction the Emperor should turn with the anxiously expected relief. His first design was to reinforce the army of the north, and resume in person, and with the aid of his Guards, his favourite project of a march upon Berlin. But Macdonald's representations of the disastrous state of the army in Silesia were so urgent, and the advance of the enemy on that side was so threatening, that he at length determined, though much against his will, to direct his steps towards Bautzen and the banks of the Bober.[1]

[1] Fain, ii. 324, 325. St-Cyr, iv. 130, 131.

In pursuance of this resolution, orders were imme-

* "Mon cousin—le Duc de Tarente (Macdonald) s'est laissé pousser sur Görlitz. Il sera possible que je sois obligé de marcher sur Bautzen, demain ou après demain. Occupez donc promptement les positions défensives."—Napoleon to St-Cyr, 1*st September* 1813. St-Cyr, iv. 391.

"Mon cousin—écrivez au Prince de la Moskwa (Ney.) Nous venons de recevoir des nouvelles du Duc de Reggio, (Oudinot,) qui a jugé convenable de venir se mettre, à deux marches, audessus de Wittenberg. Le résultat de ce mouvement intempestif est, que le corps du Général Tauenzein, et un fort parti des Cosaques, se sont portés du côté de Luckau et de Bautzen, et inquiètent les communications du Duc de Tarente. *Il est vraiment difficile d'avoir moins de tête que le Duc de Reggio.* Il n'a point su aborder l'ennemi; et il a eu l'art de faire donner un de ses corps séparément. S'il l'eut abordé franchement, il l'aurait partout culbuté."—Napoleon *to* Berthier, 2*d September* 1813. St-Cyr, vi. 393; and Jomini, iv. 417, 418, note.

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77. Defensive measures of Napoleon for the protection of Saxony.

diately given to stop at all points the pursuit of the Allied columns into Bohemia; the broken remains of Vandamme's corps, intrusted to the care of Count Lobau, after being inspected at Dresden by the Emperor, were reconducted to the inhospitable summits of the mountains at Gieshübel and Peterswalde; St-Cyr's corps was stationed between the latter point and Altenberg; while Victor occupied the passes and crest of the range from that to the right towards Freyberg. The command of the army of the north was intrusted to Ney; the Emperor being with reason dissatisfied with Oudinot, for the senseless dispersion of his force which had led to the check at Gross Beeren, as well as for the eccentric direction of his retreat towards Wittenberg instead of Torgau. That grave error had put in hazard the interior line of communication between the army of the north and the centre of operations at Dresden, and even exposed Macdonald's rear and supplies to the risk of being cut off, or disquieted by the clouds of light horse which inundated the plains beyond the Elbe, from Bernadotte's left.[1]

[1] St-Cyr, iv. 395. Jom. iv. 415. Fain, ii. 325.

78. Positions given to the French troops around Dresden.

To prevent this inconvenience, and keep up the communication between the armies of Ney and Macdonald, Marmont's corps was withdrawn from the pursuit of the Allied grand army, and transferred to Hoyerswerda, about thirty miles from the right bank of the Elbe, nearly midway between the two armies; while the Emperor himself, taking with him the Guards and reserve cavalry, and calling to his standard Poniatowski's corps, which had hitherto lain inactive in observation at Zittau, proceeded with sixty thousand choice troops to reinforce the dejected remains of the army which had been shaken by the disasters of the Katzbach. Thus, after all the losses from the preceding defeats were taken into account, sixty thousand men were left under St-Cyr, Victor, and Murat, to make head against the grand army of the Allies on the left of the Elbe;[2] a hundred and twenty thousand, under

[2] Fain, ii. 325, 326. Napoleon to St-Cyr, 3d Sept. 1813. St-Cyr, iv. 395. Jom. iv. 415, 416. Die Grosse Chron. i. 562, 566.

the Emperor in person, were directed against Blucher in Silesia; seventy thousand, under Ney, were opposed to the army of Bernadotte; and eighteen thousand, under Marmont, were in observation, and kept up the communications on the right bank of the Elbe.

79. Napoleon advances against Blucher.

The Emperor's own movement, as usual, was attended with the desired effect. On the 3d of September, he set out from Dresden in the evening, and slept that night at the chateau of Hartau, near Bischofswerda. The Guards and cuirassiers of Latour Maubourg made a magnificent appearance as they defiled along the road. The departure of the Emperor was accelerated by the intelligence received that day, of the capture of a considerable convoy of ammunition between Bautzen and Bischofswerda, by the Cossacks from Bernadotte's army. Marmont was pushed forward in that direction, to prevent a repetition of the insult, and finally took post at Hoyerswerda. On the following morning, Napoleon set out by break of day, and early in the forenoon came in contact with the advanced guard of Blucher, which was strongly posted on the high grounds of Stromberg and Vohlaerberg, beyond Hochkirch, on the road to Görlitz. The Prussian generals soon perceived, from the increased activity in the French army, and the splendid array of troops which crowded the roads coming from Dresden, that the Emperor was before them; and Blucher, faithful to the instructions he had received, and the general system agreed on at Trachenberg, immediately fell back. The French, continuing to advance, soon re-occupied Görlitz; while Blucher's retiring columns repassed successively both the Queis and the Neisse. Napoleon slept on the night of the 5th in the parsonage manse of the parish of Hochkirch; and on the following morning resumed his march in pursuit of the Allied troops, hoping that the impetuous character of the Prussian marshal, flushed with his recent victory, would lead him to halt and give battle. Blucher, however, still continued to

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retreat; and at noon, the Emperor, altogether exhausted with fatigue, entered a deserted farm-house by the way-side, where he threw himself on some straw in a shed, and mused long and profoundly on the probable issue of a contest, in which the Allies never gave him an opportunity of striking a blow in person, and the armies of his lieutenants, when left to themselves, hardly ever failed to be involved in disaster. At the close of his reverie he started up, and ordered the Guards and cuirassiers to return to Dresden, leaving Marmont in such a situation at Hoyerswerda, as to be able to give assistance, in case of need, either to Ney or Macdonald. His presence at the Saxon capital was much required; for already the Allies were beginning to resume the offensive on the frontier of Bohemia, and a terrible disaster had been incurred to the north of the Elbe.[1]

[1] Fain, ii. 325, 326. Bout. 70, 71. Odel. i. 269. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 105, 106. Plotho, ii. 162, 163.

80. Ney's movements against Bernadotte.

Ney, who had been appointed to replace Oudinot, in the command of the army of the north, had received the Emperor's instructions to march direct to Baireuth, where a corps was to be waiting him to bring reinforcements. He would there be only three days' march from Berlin; and so low did Napoleon still estimate the Prussian landwehr and light horse, that he persisted in assuring him, that if he would only keep his troops together, and put a good countenance on the matter, all that rabble would soon disperse, and he would find the road to the Prussian capital lie open before him.* The Emperor, from this opinion, and his high estimate of Ney's courage and capacity, entertained no doubts whatever of success, and repeatedly said to those around him, that they would

* "From Baireuth you will be only three days' march from Berlin. The communication with the Emperor will then be entirely established, and the attack on the Prussian capital may take place on the 9th or 10th instant. All that cloud of Cossacks and rabble of landwehr infantry will fall back on all sides when your march is once decidedly taken. You will understand the necessity of moving rapidly, in order to take advantage of the present state of inefficiency of the Allied grand army in Bohemia, which might otherwise recommence operations the moment that they became aware of the departure of the Emperor."—*Instructions to* NEY, *2d September* 1813. ST-CYR, iv. 394.

soon hear of a glorious victory. Ney, in pursuance of these instructions, and impelled not less by the ardour of his own disposition than the express command of Napoleon, immediately put himself in motion. He arrived at the headquarters of the army on the 4th of September, and found the whole troops arranged under shelter of the cannon of Wittenberg. This state of things sufficiently evinced the entire incapacity of Oudinot for separate command; for he had now altogether lost his communication with the central point of Dresden, and permitted the whole right bank of the Elbe, between that fortress and the Saxon capital, to be inundated by a deluge of Russian and Prussian light horse, who did incredible mischief to the communications and supplies of both French armies. Having reviewed his troops, and encouraged them by the assurance of prompt succour from the Emperor, Ney immediately set out on the morning of the 5th, directing his march by Zahna and Saida, so as to regain the high road from Torgau to Berlin, which was his proper line of communication with the headquarters at Dresden.[1]

1 Vaud. i. 170. Bout. 60. Jom. iv. 419. Richter, i. 434. Grosse Chron. i. 574, 576. Bign. xii. 368, 369.

81. Advances towards Dennewitz. Sept. 5.

On the evening of the same day the army was established on a line between these two villages, the Prussian advanced posts rapidly retiring before them. On the other hand, the Prince-Royal no sooner ascertained that the enemy were marching in strength against him, headed by his old comrade Marshal Ney, with whose determined character in the field he was well acquainted, than he took measures for concentrating his army. Setting out from Rabenstein, where his headquarters had been established, he marched across the country, so as to regain the great road between Torgau and Berlin. Tauenzein, who formed the advanced guard of his army, reached DENNEWITZ early in the morning of the 6th, and soon found himself in front of the vanguard of the French army, which, in its march from Zahna and Saida, had approached that village on the route to Juterback, where the great

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road from Torgau would be regained. Tauenzein immediately drew up his troops in order of battle, and unmasked a powerful battery, the fire of which arrested the progress of the Italian troops under Count Bertrand. The French general, however, was not disconcerted, but, bringing up his remaining divisions, re-established the combat; his artillery, posted on higher ground, played with advantage upon that of the Allies; and Morand advancing with his division, which was composed in great part of veterans, sensibly gained ground, and threatened the left wing of the Allies, which had first come into action, with total defeat.[1]

[1] Vaud. i. 171. Bout. 61, 62. Jom. iv. 419, 420. Richter, i. 437.

82. Battle of Dennewitz. Sept. 6.

Atlas, Plate 87.

Succour, however, was at hand; for Bulow, who commanded the Allied centre, which was marching up immediately after their left wing, and in the same direction, no sooner heard the cannonade on the side of Dennewitz, than he hastened his march, and arrived with twenty thousand Prussians, whom he deployed with the corps under Hesse-Homburg in reserve; and not contented with remaining in position, he immediately directed the troops, by an oblique advance, against the flank of Bertrand's corps, which was now pushing Tauenzein before it, in front of Dennewitz. The Prussians advanced in echelon by the left, but before they could reach the enemy, Reynier, with the Saxons, had come up to the support of Bertrand, and a combat of the most obstinate description ensued; the French centre and left presenting a front on the two sides of an oblique triangle to the enemy, and the Prussians assailing them on both its faces. After four hours' hard fighting, however, the enthusiasm of the Prussians prevailed over the intrepidity of the Saxons. The village of Niedergörsdorf and Gölsdorf were successively carried, and the French centre and left driven back in the direction of Oehna.[2]

[2] Vaud. i. 172. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 103. Bout. 62. Jom. iv. 420, 421. Sachsen and Seine Krieger, 173.

Ney, however, now came up in haste with Oudinot's corps, which was stationed to the left of the Saxons, and immediately in front of Bulow's right. The arrival of

this fresh corps, fully twenty thousand strong, made an immediate change upon the field of battle. The two corps uniting, turned fiercely on their pursuers, and, being superior in numbers, not only regained Göhlsdorf, but drove the Prussians entirely across the road to the high grounds near Wolmsdorf, from which Bulow had originally come. That general upon this brought forward his reserve ; the Saxons, though they combated bravely, were forced in their turn to retreat ; and Göhlsdorf, the object of such fierce contention, a second time fell into the hands of the Prussians. Oudinot then again advanced the division of Pacthod, and it in the first instance gained ground upon the enemy, and restored the combat. It was hard to say to which side ultimate success would incline, when, at this critical moment, the Prussian brigade of Borstel, which was marching in the rear across the country towards Jüterback, informed, near Dalichow, of the critical state of matters on the Allied right, appeared on the field, and immediately attacked, with loud cheers, the extreme left of Oudinot in flank. At the same time, the Prussians under Thumen, who had combated behind Dennewitz ever since the morning, resuming the offensive, vigorously attacked and carried that village, and drove back Bertrand's corps, who were excessively fatigued with their long march and subsequent combat, to a considerable distance. The effect of this double advantage occurring at the same time was decisive. Ney, finding both his wings driven back, and his centre in danger of being enveloped by the enemy, gave orders for a retreat at all points. This retrograde movement, however, was conducted with great regularity ; the French braved, without shrinking, the destructive fire of grape-shot from the enemy's numerous batteries, which were now hurried to the front ; and several charges of the Prussian horse were repulsed by the rolling fire and steady conduct of their retiring columns.[1]

83. Arrival of Ney with his centre on the field.

[1] Jom. iv. 421. Bout. 62, 63. Vaud. i. 172. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 103. Die Grosse Chron. i. 577, 579.

Hitherto the Prussian army, not in all above forty-

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84. The arrival of Bernadotte with the Swedish reserve decides the victory.

five thousand combatants, had singly maintained the conflict, with heroic resolution, against the French, who numbered seventy thousand sabres and bayonets. The Swedes and Russians, composing nearly a half of the army, had not yet come into action, having composed the right of the column of march, which was advancing with the left in front. But Bernadotte, with this powerful reserve, having broken up in the morning from Lobbesee and Eckmannsdorf, had now reached Kaltenborn, a league in rear of Dennewitz, where the battle was raging, and, forming his whole force in order of battle, advanced rapidly to the support of the Prussians, now wellnigh exhausted by their long and arduous exertions. The appearance of this imposing mass on the field of battle, where Ney had no longer a reserve on his part to oppose to them, was decisive. Seventy battalions of Russians and Swedes, supported by ten thousand horse of the two nations, and preceded by a hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, advanced in beautiful array of columns of attack, with sufficient space left between them for the front file to deploy, and form a continuous line. Ney, who had not been able to succeed in his attack upon the Prussians alone, was in no condition to maintain his ground when this fresh and formidable body came upon him. Disorder and vacillation speedily became visible in his retreating columns; soon four thousand Russian and Swedish cavalry advanced at the gallop to support the points of the Prussian line, where the contest was most obstinately maintained; and the ranks were no longer kept, when Bulow's men, opening with admirable discipline, made room for the infantry of the reserve to advance, and the Russian cavalry, charging furiously through the apertures, swept like a torrent round the French retreating columns.[1]

[1] Bernadotte's Official Account, Schoell, iii. 116. Bout. 64, 65. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 104, 105. Vaud. i. 172, 173. Richter, i. 443, 444.

The retreat soon turned into a flight. In vain Ney endeavoured to hold firm, with the Saxons in the centre, who were hitherto unbroken, near Rohrbeck; the troops

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there, too, were seized with a sudden panic on seeing their flanks turned by the Swedish and Russian horse, and, breaking into disorder, fled in confusion. The effects of this rout of the centre were in the highest degree disastrous; the enemy rushed into the huge gap thus formed in the middle of the line, and, vigorously pursuing the fugitives, separated the right from the left wing. In vain Arrighi brought forward his dragoons to cover the retreat; a thick cloud of dust enveloped the advancing squadrons of the pursuers, and rendered them more terrible from being unseen. Arrighi's men were shaken by the terrors by which they were surrounded, and wavered before reaching the enemy. Soon they were overwhelmed by the torrent, and drawn into its vortex, before the Russian sabres were upon them. At length the whole army presented nothing but a vast mass of fugitives. Ney did all that courage and coolness could suggest to arrest the disorder, but it was in vain: his utmost efforts could only preserve some degree of steadiness in the retiring cannoneers, who, by rapidly working their guns, prevented the total destruction of the centre; but the wings were irrevocably separated. Oudinot, with his own corps and a part of the Saxons, retreated to Schweinitz; while Ney himself, Bertrand, and the cavalry, got off to Dahme. On the day following, additional successes were gained by the Allies: Ney's rear-guard was attacked by the victorious Prussians, and defeated, with the loss of fifteen hundred prisoners; and during the night six hundred more were taken by their light horse, with eight pieces of cannon. It was not till the 8th that the French general succeeded in reuniting his shattered and divided columns, under cover of the cannon of Torgau.[1]

85. Rout of the French.

[1] Bernadotte's Official Account, Schoell, iii. 117. Bout. 64, 65. Jom. iv. 422, 423. Vaud. i. 173. Plotho, ii. 170, 172. Richter, i. 445-6.

The loss of the French in the battle of Dennewitz was very severe. It amounted, in the battle and subsequent retreat to Torgau, to thirteen thousand men, of whom one-half were prisoners; with forty-three pieces of

86. Result of the battle.

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cannon, seventeen caissons, and three standards; besides six thousand stand of arms which the fugitives threw away to accelerate their flight. The Allies lost nearly six thousand men, of whom five thousand were Prussians; a clear proof upon whom the weight of the battle had fallen, and with whom the glory of the victory should rest. But its moral consequences were far more important. The Prussian troops, of whom a large proportion were landwehr, had here in a pitched battle defeated the French, led by one of their most renowned chiefs: the stain of Jena was washed out: the days of Rosbach and the Great Frederick seemed about to return; and Berlin, no longer trembling for foreign occupation, might send forth her sons conquering and to conquer on the brightest fields of European fame.[1]

[1] Bernadotte's Official Account, Schoell, iii. 117. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 105. Bout. 66. Jom. iv. 424. Die Grosse Chron. i. 589. Plotho, ii. 174.

87. Reflections on the battle. Errors of Ney.

The French military historians, confounded at this defeat—which they could neither ascribe to the cold, as in Russia, nor to the force of overwhelming numbers, as on the second day at Culm, nor to flooded rivers, as at the Katzbach—have laboured to save the honour of their arms by ascribing it entirely to the incapacity of Marshal Ney; who had no head, they affirm, for previous combination, and never received any illumination of genius till the enemy's balls were whistling through the bayonets. Without ascribing the disaster entirely to this cause, it must be admitted that the conduct of the French marshal on this occasion was not such as to support his great reputation. Like Oudinot at Gross Beeren, he was surprised by an attack on his line of march when little prepared for it, and under circumstances when such an event was not only probable but certain. When Ney took the command of the army under the cannon of Wittenberg, it was completely concentrated, and occupied a position of all others best adapted to act with effect on the army of the Allies, then occupying a line above twenty miles in length, from Rabenstein to Saida. Instead of this, he brought up his columns to the attack

in so desultory a manner, that he was never able to take any advantage of the great superiority of force which he might have thrown upon any point of the enemy's line, and in the end had the whole hostile array on his hands, before he had been able to make any impression on the corps first engaged. In justice, however, to the French marshal, it must be observed, that he was on this occasion very indifferently aided by his lieutenants; and that Oudinot, in particular, stung to the quick by having been deprived of the command, by no means pressed forward into action with the alacrity which might have been expected from his daring character. This jealousy of the marshals of each other, already so long known and sorely experienced in the Peninsular war, had risen to such a height in Germany as to render all cordial co-operation impossible, except under the immediate eye and authority of the Emperor.[1]

[1] Bout. 68, 69. Jom. iv. 25.

88. Errors of Bernadotte.

Nor was the conduct of the Prince-Royal, though crowned with success, by any means beyond the reach of censure. Great as his victory was, it would have been much more decisive, if, instead of marching with his reserves on Eckmannsdorf and Wolmsdorf, that is, in the rear of the Prussian line of battle, at the distance of five miles, he had followed the march of Tauenzein and Bulow by the great road direct on Dennewitz, which would have brought an overwhelming force on the flank of the French at the crisis of the battle, just as Ney did to the Allies at Bautzen, and Blucher to Napoleon at Waterloo. Still more, his pursuit was languid and inefficient; he made no sufficient use of the unparalleled advantage of having utterly routed the enemy's centre, and separated their two wings from each other: his noble cavalry were not, on the day after the battle, thrown with sufficient vigour on the traces of the flying foe; and an army which had been routed on the field, in a way hardly to be equalled in modern war, was allowed to retire with scarcely any molestation to the Elbe,[2] and

[2] Jom. iv. 424, 425. Bout. 68, 69. Richter, i. 438, 440.

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reunite its dissevered wings at Torgau, while the victor remained inactive at Juterback, only a few miles from the field of battle.

89. Admirable conduct of the Prussian generals and soldiers.

But if the conduct of Bernadotte, both at Dennewitz and Gross Beeren, was open to serious reproach, and indicated not obscurely a wish to spare the native troops of Sweden, and not even to push the advantages gained by the Prussians to the utmost, the vigour, resolution, and capacity evinced by the Prussian generals, especially Bulow and Borstel, in bearing up, for half the day, against superior forces on the part of the enemy, were most conspicuous. In particular, the perfect unanimity and concord with which they supported each other on every trying occasion, and the true military instinct which led them, at once and without orders, to hasten where the cannon was loudest and the danger greatest, were beyond all praise; and, seconded by the devotion and valour of their brave though inexperienced followers, mainly contributed to the victory on both these glorious days. Never, in truth, was a more animating spectacle witnessed than the Prussian army exhibited at that period. Jealousies there were none in that noble array; individual interests, separate desires, were forgotten; old-established feuds were healed; recent rivalries were suppressed; one only feeling, the love of country, throbbed in every heart; one only passion, the desire to save it, gave strength to every hand.[1]

[1] Bout. 69, 70. Die Grosse Chron. i. 589, 595.

90. These defeats destroy the charm of French invincibility.

The repeated defeats which he had thus experienced in every quarter, and under circumstances where the faults of generalship appeared to be pretty equally divided between the contending parties, at length brought home to Napoleon the painful conviction, that neither his own troops nor those of his opponents were what they once had been. However much the adulation of his military courtiers might at the time, or the fond partiality of his subsequent panegyrists may still, be inclined

to ascribe these misfortunes to errors of conduct on the part of the generals at the head of the movements, or to inconceivable fatality, their reiterated occurrence, under every variety of command, officers, and troops engaged, was sufficient to demonstrate to all unprejudiced observers, that the long-established superiority of the revolutionary troops was at an end. In presence of the Emperor, indeed, and with the consciousness that his redoubtable Guards and cuirassiers were at hand to arrest any disorder, the conscripts evinced extraordinary enthusiasm, and still performed heroic actions. It was the able use which he made of that formidable reserve of fifty thousand chosen veterans, in battles where he commanded in person, which so long arrested the tide of disaster. But where this great cause of enthusiasm and tower of strength was wanting, the usual appearances of a sinking cause had become visible.

91. Especially where the marshals commanded, and not Napoleon.

The marshals wanted vigour, and had become either timid and over-circumspect, or were unduly rash and overweening in their movements. The troops generally went into battle with courage, but they failed to sustain it with constancy; and on the first appearance of a reverse, took to flight by whole battalions, or laid down their arms, like the Austrians in the beginning of the war, in large bodies. Thirty thousand prisoners and two hundred guns had been taken by the Allies in pitched battles, within three weeks after the resumption of hostilities; while the Russians retreated from the Niemen to Moscow, a distance of six hundred miles, in presence of four hundred thousand men in close pursuit, without one battalion being broken, or one standard taken. A change, therefore, had plainly come over the spirit of the contest: the old enthusiasm of the Revolution was worn out, the military array of the empire had broken down; while its oppression had roused an indomitable spirit of resistance on the other side, and its antagonists had learned, in combating, to conquer it.

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The effects of this truth being perceived, were in the highest degree important. Napoleon lost confidence in his troops and his fortune, and no longer attempted those daring strokes which had so often in former campaigns secured him success; while his marshals evinced that dread of responsibility, and nervousness about consequences, which are the invariable attendants, save among those whom a sense of duty supports, of the secret anticipation of disaster.

92. Second advance of the Allies towards Dresden.

While these events were taking place in the northern line of operations, the Allied grand army had resumed the offensive on the Bohemian frontier. No sooner was Schwartzenberg made aware, by the cessation of the pursuit of his columns, that Napoleon had set out in a different direction, than he put his troops in motion,

Sept. 5. again to threaten the Saxon capital. On the 5th September Wittgenstein crossed the mountains with the right wing, and pushed his advanced guard to Nollendorf,

Sept. 6. and on the following day he reached Gieshübel; while Ziethen occupied Gross Kota, and Count Pahlen and Prince Eugene of Würtemberg, who had crossed by Heppersdorf, took possession of Nentmansdorf. On the

Sept. 7. day following, Wittgenstein, continuing his march, occupied Pirna, and his advanced posts again appeared in the environs of Dresden; Schwartzenberg himself, with his heavily laden Austrians, also approached the mountains in the rear of the Russians, and on the 8th reached Aussig, near Töplitz. At the same time, certain intelligence was received that Benningsen, with the Russian reserve, full sixty thousand strong, was advancing by rapid strides from the Oder, and might be expected on the Elbe before the end of September. This information was accompanied by the opinion from St-Cyr, that "the system of the enemy is to hazard nothing on the points where the Emperor is ascertained to be with the troops which he always brings along with him.[1] It may be presumed, therefore, that he will undertake no operation

[1] Bout. 71, 72. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 106, 107. St-Cyr to Napoleon, Sept. 3, 4, 5, and 7, 1813. St-Cyr, iv. 397, 405. Plotho, ii. 177, 178.

against Dresden so long as his majesty, with his Guards, is known to be in the neighbourhood of that town; but that he will march against it as soon as they are withdrawn, the great bulk of his force being concentrated within one march of Dresden, on the passes of Altenberg, Fürstenwalde, and Peterswalde."

93. Napoleon resumes the offensive in Bohemia with the Guards. Sept. 7.

Napoleon had no sooner received this intelligence than he took measures for the concentration of his troops on the side of Silesia, by ordering Macdonald to retire to Bautzen, near which Poniatowski was placed, so as to form his left, while he himself, with the Guards, set out in the direction of Pirna; Marmont was drawn back with his corps to Dresden, and a division, ten thousand strong, was stationed at Leipsic under Margaron. The repeated checks he had received made him feel the necessity of contracting his circle of operations, and stationing his generals at such distances from the central Saxon capital, that in a day or two he might be able, with his Guards and reserve, to carry succour to any quarter where their assistance might be required. Meanwhile the Russian army, in great strength, was concentrating in the environs of Culm and Töplitz, while the Austrians were coming up behind them, though still at a considerable distance, from the side of Prague. The Emperor felt strongly the necessity of delivering some decisive blow, to extricate himself from his difficulties; and immediately after he joined Marshal St-Cyr, in the neighbourhood of Pirna, on the evening of the 7th, he had a long conversation with that able general, in the course of which he admitted that "he had lost a brilliant opportunity of striking such a blow, by halting the Young Guard at Pirna when Vandamme was advancing to Culm;" but still inclined to the opinion that it should now be directed against Blucher or Bernadotte, and insisted that the grand Allied army would attempt nothing during his absence.[1] Impressed with these ideas, which St-Cyr in vain combated with military frankness,

[1] St-Cyr, iv. 140, 143. Bout. 72. Vaud. i. 176. Die Grosse Chron. i. 627, 630. Richter, ii. 87, 99.

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he returned to Dresden the same night, meditating a great blow against Bernadotte, and consequent triumphal entry into Berlin. But early next morning he was roused from his dream of security, and recalled to the advanced posts on the side of Pirna by the sound of cannon, which announced a formidable attack by the Russian vanguard in that quarter.

94. He forces back the Russian centre.

Quick as lightning, Napoleon moved up his Guards and cuirassiers to the scene of action; and after reconnoitring the enemy's columns from the heights of Gahrnig, determined that, although the great body of his reserves had not yet come up, it was advisable not to delay the attack, as by the next day the plateau which the enemy occupied would be so strongly supported by artillery as to be altogether unassailable. He, accordingly, forthwith put his troops in motion, and, aiming his movement against the left of the Allied advanced guard, he directed the weight of his forces towards Liebstadt, whereby he threatened their communications with Töplitz. To avoid that danger, Wittgenstein immediately withdrew his men, and joined Kleist at Nollendorf; while at the same time Klenau's Austrians, who had been pushed on towards Chemnitz, retired to Marienberg. The arrival of Napoleon was felt like a shock along the whole line of the Bohemian hills. Satisfied with this advantage, Napoleon retired to his quarters at Dohna, where he received from Ney's aide-de-camp the whole details of the disaster at Dennewitz. The Emperor interrogated him closely as to all the particulars, and explained in the most lucid manner the causes of the reverse to the generals present, without giving vent to any ill-humour whatever against his lieutenant, but ascribing it all to the difficulties of the military art, which, he said, were far from being generally understood.* He had just received the account of one of

* Napoleon's conversation on this occasion, which is reported by St-Cyr, who was present, was very remarkable:—"The Emperor interrogated the officer minutely, and entered with the most imperturbable *sang-froid* into the move-

the greatest disasters of the campaign, and which in the end was attended with the most ruinous effects to his fortunes; yet he was not only calm enough to discuss the subject, as he would have done the wars of Scipio and Hannibal, but he had the magnanimity—rare on his part, under similar circumstances—to exculpate entirely the general whose errors had had no small share in inducing it.[1]

[1] St-Cyr, iv. 149, 150. Bout. 73, 74.

95. Napoleon reaches the summit of the mountains. Aug. 10.

On the following morning at daybreak, St-Cyr's corps pursued its march, and reached without opposition the village of Ebersdorf, on the Geyserberg—the highest point of the mountains between Saxony and Bohemia; and from the heights adjoining which the eye can discover a considerable expanse of the plains from Töplitz towards Prague. No sooner had the Emperor set foot on the frontier, than he despatched a messenger to the King of

ments of the different corps; after which he explained, in a manner equally lucid and satisfactory, the causes of the reverse, but without the slightest expression of ill-humour, or any manifestation of displeasure at Ney, or any of the generals engaged. He ascribed the whole to the difficulties of the art, which, he said, were far from being generally known. He added that, one day or other, if he had time, he would write a book on the subject, in which he would demonstrate its principles in a manner so precise that they should be within the reach of all military men, and enable them to learn the art of war as they learn any other science. I (St-Cyr) replied, that it were much to be wished that the experience of such a man should not be lost to France, but that I had always doubted whether it were practicable to form such a work, though, if any one could do so, it was himself; that it seemed extremely doubtful whether the longest experience or practice was the best school for learning the art of a commander; that of all the generals, whether on our own side or that of our enemies, whom we had seen at the head of the armies of Europe, in all the long wars which the French Revolution had occasioned, none appeared to have gained by experience; and that I did not make any exception in his own case, as I had always considered his first campaign in Italy as his *chef-d'œuvre* in war. He said I was right, and that, considering the limited force he then had at his disposal, he regarded it as his greatest campaign; that he knew but one general who had constantly gained by experience, and that was Turenne—whose great talents were the result of profound study, and who had approached nearest to the end which he proposed to demonstrate, if one day he had time to compose the work which he had mentioned. That conversation was brought on by the recital of one of the greatest disasters of the campaign—a disaster attended with terrible effects to the interests of many, and of none so much as himself. He spoke of it, nevertheless, as calmly as he would have done of the affairs of China, or of Europe in the preceding century."— ST-CYR, *Histoire Militaire*, iv. 149, 150.

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Saxony to announce that the enemy was thrown back into Bohemia, and then halted to gaze at the prospect which opened before him. Immediately at his feet descended the rapid slope of the Geyserberg, its sides, naked rocks or hanging woods, with the road, which was much cut up by the retreat of the Allied troops from Dresden, descending in zig-zag down the steep, till it was lost in the gulf at its feet. The artillery with extraordinary alacrity threw themselves into the hollow, and already the descent of the army had commenced, when the progress of the column was stopped by a carriage breaking down in a hollow part of the way; Drouot was sent forward to report on the passage, and he stated that it was impracticable till it was repaired. A few hours only, however, were required for that purpose, and Napoleon had himself shown, at the passage of the Landgrafensberg, the evening before the battle of Jena,[1] how quickly the most formidable obstacles of that description yield to the vigorous exertions of a skilful body of engineers.[2]

[1] *Ante*, ch. xliii. § 41.
[2] Richter, ii. 104. Odel. i. 276. Fain, ii. 231. St-Cyr, iv. 157. Plotho, ii. 192.

96. But declines to descend to Culm, or enter Bohemia.

St-Cyr eagerly pointed to the plain at the foot of the mountain, where the Russian and Prussian army were to be seen in great masses, deploying, widening, and extending, as if in preparation for an immediate attack. From the rapidity of their movements, the confusion which prevailed, and the hurrying of officers to and fro, it was evident that they expected to be instantly assailed, for which they were little prepared, and that their leaders were in great anxiety for the result, as their situation and the nature of the ground in their rear would not admit of a retreat in presence of the enemy; while a huge column of smoke, the agreed-on signal, rising from the elevated summits of the Millerschauer, the highest point of the range, told to the whole north of Bohemia that the dreaded invasion of the Franks had commenced. The Grand-duke Constantine's reserve of the Guards were the first in position, next Wittgenstein's Russians, and

Kleist's Prussians, formed in close array; but still there was no appearance of the Austrians; and St-Cyr strongly urged the Emperor to hasten the attack, when his whole forces were at hand, and the Russians and Prussians, in a position from which they could not recede, stood alone exposed to his blows. Napoleon, who, from the elevated position which he occupied, beheld every rank, almost every man, in the hostile array, remained with the telescope at his eye, intently gazing on the enemy for above an hour; but at the end of that time he said, "I will not attack the enemy in that position, but cautiously conceal my intention. Let the engineers continue to repair the road to-day and to-morrow; and suffer every one to rest in the belief that we are to have a great battle; if you are attacked on the mountain I will support you." So saying, he returned to Pirna much dejected at the failure of his designs, and the day after re-entered Dresden; having thereby lost the only opportunity which presented itself, during the campaign, of engaging on favourable terms the Russians and Prussians when detached from the Austrians.[1]

Sept. 11.
[1] St-Cyr, iv. 156, 158. Fain, ii. 332. Odel. i. 276, 277. Grosse Chron. i. 635. Plotho, ii. 193.

97. The Allies again attack St-Cyr when the Emperor retires.

St-Cyr's sinister presentiments were not long of being verified. No sooner were the Allies aware, by the cessation of the advance, that Napoleon was no longer on the summit of the Erzgebirge, than they again resumed at all points their offensive movement. Wittgenstein ascended directly towards Nollendorf; and two regiments of Russian hussars attacked, without waiting the arrival of the other troops, the French division of Dumonceau on the summit of the mountain, cut to pieces one battalion, made prisoners of another, and forced back the whole to Peterswalde, with the loss of above fifteen hundred men, which compelled St-Cyr to draw back his whole corps to Gieshübel. Meanwhile Napoleon was busied with orders for the construction of a bridge over the Elbe at Pirna, and the formation of a great series of redoubts around it, to secure the passage of the army from one bank of the

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Elbe to the other; as also intrenchments on a large scale near Gieshübel, to bar the entrance from Bohemia in that quarter. Everything announced a resolution to hold by the Elbe to the last extremity, and, without resuming the offensive to any considerable degree at any one point, to maintain that line as long as possible, and take advantage of any errors the enemy might commit in their operations on an immense circumference around it. During all this time, however, the troops, perched on the inhospitable summits of the Erzgebirge, were starving; the few villages which were to be met with in those elevated regions, devastated by the triple passage of armies over them, were entirely laid waste: so universal was the destruction, that it was with the utmost difficulty, and only by repairing a ruin, that quarters were got for the Emperor himself in the parish manse at Breitenau. The conscripts, stretched on the cold ground, had no protection against the frosty nights and frigid dews of autumn, nor was their satisfaction increased by beholding their adversaries comfortably encamped in the rich plains of Culm and Töplitz, and hearing the joyous sound of the *feux-de-joie* which announced the universal transports of the Allied troops at the victory of Dennewitz.[1]

[1] Richter, ii. 104, 105. Odel. i. 277, 279. Fain, ii. 333. St-Cyr, iv. 167, 168. Lond. 136. Plotho, ii. 196.

98. Napoleon again returns to the frontier and repels the enemy. Sept. 15.

No sooner was Napoleon informed that the Allies were again threatening St-Cyr, and of the check experienced by Dumonceau, than he hastened, at the head of a powerful body of his Guards and cuirassiers, to the frontier. Suddenly approaching Peterswalde, he fell unexpectedly with superior forces on a considerable body of the enemy's horse, which was defeated, and Colonel Blucher, son of the marshal, after a gallant resistance, made prisoner. On this occasion the Emperor altered his line of attack: it was against the enemy's right, and ascending the course of the Elbe, that his columns were directed; in consequence, he found the roads everywhere passable, and the enemy were without difficulty thrown back into the Bohemian plain. There, however, they stood firm,

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and took a position in the level, ready to give battle. The opportunity of striking a blow with advantage had been lost: great part of the Allied army were now assembled, above seventy thousand strong, in the plain at the foot of the mountains. Ziethen, with their advanced guard, occupied a wood at the base of the hill, Wittgenstein was in Culm, Colloredo on the heights of Striesewitz in its neighbourhood, and Kleist at Siberschen: the Russian and Prussian Guards were in reserve between Culm and Töplitz.[1]

Sept. 17. [1] Bout. 77, 78. St-Cyr, iv. 169, 170. Fain, ii. 333. Better, i. 120, 121. Grosse Chron. i. 641.

99. Views of the opposite generals at this period. Treaties of Töplitz between Austria, Russia, and Prussia. Sept. 9.

Everything seemed to presage a decisive battle, and the soldiers in both armies expected it. Nevertheless, the crisis passed over with nothing more than some sharp affairs of advanced guards. In truth, the generals on both sides were desirous to avoid such an extremity: it was obviously for the interest of the Allies to postpone any general engagement till the arrival of Benningsen's reserve had added sixty thousand fresh troops to their arms; and Napoleon was desirous not to descend with the bulk of his forces into the Bohemian plain, both because retreat back again over the mountains, in case of disaster, was difficult, and because he still thought that it was on the side of Berlin or Silesia that the decisive blow was to be struck, or that some unguarded movement on the side of the Allied generals would soon enable him to deliver it with advantage. He had no fixed plan, but was on the look-out for his opportunity, and he saw clearly it was not to be found on the side of Bohemia.* Meanwhile Austria, encouraged by the great successes which had in so many quarters attended the Allied arms, signed, on the 9th September, two important treaties with Russia and Prussia. By this treaty it was provided that Austria

* "Yesterday I made a reconnaissance to ascertain the force and position of the enemy; and although the debouch of Peterswalde was favourable for artillery, the declivities being gentle, the position of the enemy did not permit me to attack him. I have resolved, therefore, to hold to the system of go and come, and to await my opportunity."—NAPOLEON *to* ST-CYR, 18*th September* 1813. ST-CYR, iv. 421.

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should be reconstructed as nearly as possible as she stood in 1805, the Confederation of the Rhine dissolved, and the independence of the intermediate states between the Inn and the Rhine established. Each of the three powers was to keep 150,000 men in the field, and to augment that number if it became necessary; and they engaged not to enter into any separate treaty with France. By the secret articles, the 32d military division of the French empire was to be dissolved, the French princes in Germany dispossessed, and these stipulations communicated only to Prussia.[1]

[1] St-Cyr, iv. 173, 175. Vaud. i. 179. Bout. 78, 79. Plotho, ii. 206, 208. Better, i. 128, 129. Bign. xii. 261.

100. Affair of Nollendorf, in which the French are worsted.

Napoleon, however, desirous not to depart for Dresden without having accomplished something worthy of his renown, and which might check the Allies from renewing their incursions during his absence, ordered, on the afternoon of the 17th, a partial descent into the plain, and attack on the enemy's position. Ziethen, who held the post at the foot of the descent, was dislodged, and driven back towards Culm by Mouton Duvernet, and Arbesau was carried. Napoleon himself, encouraged by the success of his advanced guard, descended to Dodnitz, at the foot of the declivity, where he eagerly reconnoitred the position and strength of the enemy. An obscure haze concealed the greater part of the hostile columns; even the chapel of Culm could not be discerned through the mist; when suddenly a terrible cannonade, loudly re-echoed from the neighbouring mountains, burst forth on the right and left: numerous batteries, placed on the heights on either side, concealed by the woods and fog, sent a storm of bullets down on the advancing columns; while the Russians in front, resuming the offensive, with loud shouts returned to the charge. Napoleon quickly retired to the heights, but the column which had advanced into the plain did not escape without very serious loss. Colloredo turned their left, and regained Arbesau at the point of the bayonet;[2] Meerfeldt, on the right, moved direct from Aussig on Nollendorf, so as to threaten their

[2] Plotho, ii. 216. Vaud. i. 179. Lond. 138. Bout. 78, 79. Odel. i. 282, 284. Fain, ii. 334. Grosse Chron. i. 644, 645.

retreat, while Wittgenstein and Ziethen fiercely assailed their rear. A thick fog, which prematurely brought on the darkness of night, alone saved the whole division, which had descended into the plain, from total destruction; but as it was, they only regained the mountains with the loss of an eagle, three guns, and twelve hundred prisoners, besides an equal number killed and wounded.

101. Napoleon marches again against Blucher.

Convinced by the view he had now obtained of the positions and strength of the enemy, that nothing was to be made of an attack on the side of Bohemia, and conceiving that the Allies were so situated and scattered, that they could not make any formidable attack on the French position on the mountains, at least for some days,* Napoleon returned to Pirna, and from thence to Dresden. After a few hours' rest there, he continued his march with his Guards and cuirassiers across the Elbe, to check the incursions of Blucher, who, taking advantage of the Emperor's absence, was now driving Macdonald before him, and had already occupied Bautzen and extended himself along the line of the Spree. Napoleon arrived in front of the enemy, whose advanced posts were in the wood of Hartau. He immediately mounted on horseback, and a skirmish ensued, in the course of which the village of Goldbach became the prey of the flames. That night the Emperor slept at a miserable hamlet near Hartau, with only a part of his Guards around him; the remainder, unable to bear up against the incessant fatigue of so many marches and countermarches which led to nothing, had fallen behind.[1]

Sept. 21.

Sept. 22.

[1] Fain, ii. 336. Odel. i. 287, 288. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 110, 111. Better, i. 128, 129.

The utmost melancholy prevailed at his headquarters. The campaign seemed endless; the troops, worn out by dreadful fatigue and the severest privations, had lost

* On the morning of the 18th, when the mist had cleared away, Napoleon ascended an eminence, and for long gazed through his telescope at the columns of the enemy. "All that I can see," said he to Berthier, "forms perhaps two corps of 60,000 men: they will require more than one day before they can unite and attack. Let us return to Pirna."—Fain, ii. 334.

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much of their former spirit. Toils, sickness, and the sword of the enemy had in an extraordinary degree thinned their ranks; and the generals could not conceal from themselves, that the French army, daily hemmed in within a more contracted circle, and diminishing in numbers, was no longer able to resume the offensive with a prospect of success at any point. On the following day, the Emperor seemed, what was most unusual to him, a prey to indecision. Blucher's army was drawn up in order of battle, but he did not venture to attack him; and after remaining under arms for the whole forenoon, he galloped at ten in the evening towards Neustadt, where a body of Austrians and Russians, under General Neipperg, was engaged in a skirmish with Lauriston, previous to their retiring into Bohemia. Next day, feeling himself too weak to resume the offensive in any direction, he returned to Dresden; and, being sensible of the necessity of contracting his circle of operations, withdrew Macdonald's army to Weissig, within two leagues of that capital, thereby in effect abandoning the whole right bank of the Elbe to the Allies. On the morning of that day there was a dreadful storm, accompanied with loud peals of thunder: an unusual circumstance so late in the season, and when the chill of winter was already felt; which, combined with the state of the Emperor's fortunes, was deemed by many ominous of his fall.[1]

102. Returns to Dresden without effecting anything.

Sept. 24. [1] Odel. i. 287, 289. Jom. iv. 431. Fain, ii. 335, 336. Bout. 83.

103. Partisan warfare in the rear of the French. Sept. 10.

While these indecisive but important operations were going on in Saxony and on the Bohemian frontier, a serious partisan warfare had sprung up in the rear of the French army towards Leipsic and Westphalia. Secure in their mountain stronghold of Bohemia, the Allied sovereigns wisely resolved to take advantage of their great superiority in light horse, to threaten the French communications, and seize their convoys on the roads to the Rhine. With this view, Schwartzenberg advanced Klenau's corps to Freiburg, where he made four hundred

prisoners; from whence Thielman, with three thousand horse, was detached to scour the country towards Leipsic; while Mensdorf, with two thousand, beset the road from Dresden and Torgau towards that city. Thielman at first had considerable success. He attacked and destroyed, near Weissenfels, a large convoy of ammunition destined for Sept. 11. the use of the Grand Army; made prisoners five hundred men in Merseburg, and spread alarm through the whole Sept. 18. of western Saxony. Lefebvre Desnouettes, however, now took the field with eight thousand *chasseurs à cheval* and cavalry of the Guard, and, coming up with the Saxon partisan near Merseburg, defeated him with considerable Sept. 24. loss, and obliged him to retire towards Zwickau, after abandoning his prisoners. This check, however, had no other effect than that of calling forth Platoff, who issued Sept. 26. from Bohemia with seven thousand Cossacks and Austrian horse, two days after, and, directing his march to Altenburg, where Lefebvre Desnouettes lay, wholly unconscious Sept. 28. of the impending danger, attacked him with such vigour that he was quickly driven back to Zeitz. The French general, however, was effecting his retreat by echelon in good order, while still pressed by Platoff in rear, when he was attacked by Thielman, who had rallied after his check, and totally defeated with the loss of five guns and fifteen hundred prisoners; a blow the more sensibly felt, that it fell on some of the best corps of cavalry in the French army.[1]

[1] Lond. 141, 142. Bout. 84, 85. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 112. Die Grosse Chron. i. 605, 612.

104. Commencement of the siege of Wittenberg.

Operations of a still more important character were undertaken at the same period by the army of the Prince-Royal in the north of Germany. Slowly advancing after his important victory at Dennewitz, Bernadotte at length moved his headquarters, a week after the battle, to Koswig, in the direction of the Elbe, and on the 15th Sept. 15. he had got as far as Zerbst, while his vanguard was at Dessau on the Elbe. Bulow, meanwhile, laid siege to Wittenberg. The operations were pushed forward with great vigour, and on the 24th the suburbs were carried; Sept. 24.

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under cover of a heavy bombardment, which set the town on fire in many different places, the second parallel was opened; and everything announced that, if not relieved, it could not hold out for any considerable time. Ney, who commanded now only two corps, not numbering above fifty thousand combatants, (Oudinot's corps having been dissolved, and its remains incorporated with the two others after the disaster of Dennewitz,) was in no condition to raise the siege; and a movement which he made from Torgau, to clear the left bank of the Elbe of some of the Allied parties who had begun to infest it, had no other effect but to make them withdraw within the *tête-de-pont* at Dessau, which he did not feel himself in sufficient strength to attack.[1]

[1] Bout. 80, 81. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 109, 110. Plotho, ii. 173, 174.

105. Great success of Chernicheff in Westphalia.

Meanwhile Chernicheff, with more than his wonted boldness and address, carried the partisan warfare with the most signal success into the heart of Westphalia. Detached with three thousand horse from the army of the north, this indefatigable leader crossed the Elbe at Dessau, and, pushing with great celerity across Germany, reached Cassel, the capital of the kingdom of Westphalia, in the

Sept. 30.

end of September. Jerome, with the few troops which the necessities of the Emperor had left him for the defence of his capital, made a precipitate retreat without firing a shot; and Chernicheff immediately made his entry into the city at the head of his Cossacks, amidst the vociferous applause of the people, and proclaimed the dissolution of the kingdom of Westphalia. Symptoms of insurrection against the French authorities were immmediately manifested; the students flocked in hundreds to be enrolled in battalions of volunteers; crowds assembled in the streets loudly demanding arms, and the flame rapidly spread into all the villages in the neighbourhood. But the Russian commander, being destitute of infantry and artillery, was unable to maintain the advanced position which he had gained; and, after remaining in the capital a week, he was obliged, by the approach of a considerable body of

French troops, to evacuate it and retire across the Elbe. He regained the right bank of that river, however, as he had effected his advance, without losing a man, taking with him in triumph the stores of the arsenal, the royal horses and carriages, and an immense store of booty beneath the saddles of his Cossacks. But the moral effect of this blow far exceeded these predatory gains. The brother of Napoleon had been compelled to flee from his capital; his dethronement pronounced and all but effected, by a foreign partisan; and a dangerous example had thus been given to the world of the facility with which these oppressive foreign thrones, destitute of all support in the interests or affections of the people, might be swept from the earth, the moment the military power which upheld them was overturned. The effect, accordingly, of this stroke was soon felt through the whole north of Germany: already a Saxon battalion had come over from the camp of Marshal Ney to that of the Prince-Royal; the remainder was only prevented by their personal regard for their sovereign, and the energetic appeals which he made to their military honour, from following the example; and more than one Westphalian battalion, after the surrender of Cassel, took the first opportunity of passing over from their fugitive monarch to the ranks of German freedom.[1]

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Sept. 27.

1 Fain, ii. 357, 359. Bout. 84, 85. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 113. Vaud. i. 182, 183. Die Grosse Chron. i. 589, 596.

106. Operations of Davoust and Walmoden on the Lower Elbe.

Operations also of minor importance, but still of great local interest, had, during the same period, taken place on the Lower Elbe. The forces there were very nearly matched: Davoust having above thirty-five thousand men under his command at Hamburg, besides twelve thousand Danes, and Walmoden thirty-five thousand on the outside of its walls. Neither party, for some time after hostilities were resumed, made any considerable movements: but at length the French marshal issued forth on the right bank of the Elbe, and moved towards Berlin. Lauenburg was early attacked by a battalion of French infantry, and the partisan corps of Jutzon expelled. Walmoden, whose

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forces were injudiciously scattered, had not troops adequate at any one point to restrain the enemy; and the consequence was that he was compelled to fall back towards Grabow, leaving his right wing, composed of Swedes under Vegesack, seriously endangered. Davoust's instructions, however, were to await the result of Oudinot's advance at that period to Berlin; and he remained, therefore, inactive at Schwerin, till the defeat of Gross Beeren having rendered the projected combined movement against the Prussian capital impossible, he made the best of his way back to the Elbe. In doing so, the Danes under his command separated from the French, the former retiring to Lübeck, and the latter to the lines in front of Hamburg.[1]

Aug. 30.

[1] Bout. 85, 87. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 113, 114. Vaud. i. 186, 187. Die Grosse Chron. i. 597, note.

107. Walmoden destroys the French division Pécheux.

Though this sortie of the French from Hamburg was attended with no material results, and, by leading to the dislocation of the French and Danish forces, was rather hurtful than beneficial to their cause, yet it opened the eyes of the Allied generals to the necessity of strengthening the force which observed the enemy's operations in that quarter. With this view, twenty thousand of the landwehr of Mecklenburg and Swedish Pomerania were called out, who did good service, by rendering disposable a much larger portion of Walmoden's regular forces than he had hitherto been able to bring into the field. The beneficial effects of this arrangement were soon conspicuous. One of his light squadrons, which scoured the left bank of the Elbe, having intercepted a despatch from the French marshal to the governor of Magdeburg, in which he announced his intention of despatching the division Pécheux from Hamburg to reinforce the garrison of that fortress, which was threatened with a siege after the rout of Dennewitz, the Prussian general immediately took measures to intercept and destroy that force. For this purpose, leaving Vegesack, with the Swedes and landwehr of Mecklenburg, in the environs of Schwerin to observe Davoust, he himself set out with the flower of his

army, sixteen thousand strong, for Dörnitz, where, with surprising celerity, he threw a bridge of boats across the Elbe, and, having crossed the river, came up with Pécheux, who had six thousand men and eight pieces of cannon, at the village of Görda, near Dannenberg. There the French were speedily assailed by forces twice as numerous as their own, and totally defeated. The general and eighteen hundred men were made prisoners; the whole guns and caissons taken, and twelve hundred killed and wounded; while the Allies lost only eight hundred men. Having gained this brilliant success, Walmoden instantly recrossed the Elbe to oppose Davoust, who was greatly superior to the forces left to observe him; and with such secrecy and skill were the operations conducted, that he was back, like the Consul Nero in the war with Hannibal, before the enemy were aware of his absence.[1]

Sept. 16.

1 Vict. et. Conq. xxii. 114, 115. Bout. 88, 89. Vaud. i. 187, 188. Plotho, ii. 321. Varnhagen Von Ense, 41.

Matters had now arrived at such a pass with Napoleon, that a change of position, and an alteration of his line of action, had become indispensable. With equal judgment and ability, he had taken every possible advantage of the fortified line of the Elbe; and by means of the skilful use of his bridges over that river, and his interior line of communications, he had long, with inferior forces, maintained his ground in the heart of Germany. By so doing, he had preserved his ascendency over the states of the Rhenish confederacy longer than in any other way could have been practicable, and kept at bay forces of the Allies, by which, under any other system of operations, he would in all probability ere this have been crushed. But the time had now arrived when this defensive system could no longer be maintained. Rich as the agricultural productions of Saxony are, they were by this time entirely consumed by the enormous multitudes of men and horses who had so long been quartered on its territory;[2] and the contracted circle within which, on all sides, the French armies now stood, rendered it totally impossible for any

108. Reasons which now compelled a change of the seat of war by Napoleon.

2 St-Cyr, iv. 177. Odel. i. 268. Tém. Ocul. ii. 196, 197.

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further subsistence to be extracted from the soil; while the increasing audacity and strength of the Allied cavalry made any supplies from the rear to the last degree precarious.

109. Deplorable condition of the French quarters.

Not only had all the towns and villages around Dresden been long ago exhausted by the triple scourge of quartering, pillage, and contributions, but the forage was everywhere totally consumed, the stack-yards emptied, the houses burnt or in ruins; while the fields of potatoes in the rural districts, in some cases ten times turned over in search of food, told to what shifts the countless swarms of troops of all nations, by whom they had been trodden, had been reduced.* On the small town of Pirna, already reduced to despair by previous exactions, the crushing burden of six thousand rations a-day was imposed in the end of September; while, such were the necessities or cupidity of the soldiers, when quartered in the villages between it and Dresden, that not only were the wooden crosses, erected by the piety of former ages over the places of interment, torn up and burnt for firewood, but the graves themselves were opened; the coffins were broken and dragged up, the bones and corpses scattered about, the very shrouds and dead-clothes they contained, with the garlands of flowers found on once-loved hearts, seized by avaricious hands, and sold to the miscreants who followed the army to profit by its excesses.[1]

[1] Témoin Oculaire, ii. 196, 197. Odel. i. 268, 269, 278. St-Cyr, iv. 177, 178.

Deplorable as was the condition of the troops in the environs of Dresden, from the total ruin of the country, and the excessive privations to which they were exposed, their lot was enviable compared to that of a great part of the soldiers who were accumulated in the towns. The latter had warmth and lodging, indeed, but they were

* "Not a vestige of forage was to be got for the horses. The frontier villages were all in ruins. All the houses not built of stone were torn to pieces for the fires of the bivouacs. All the environs bore the impress of the ravages of war. The earth in the fields, which had been ten times turned over, was again carefully searched for the few potatoes which might have escaped the eye of former plunder."—*Témoin Oculaire*, in ODELEBEN, ii. 278.

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110. Deplorable condition of the French in Dresden, Torgau, and the fortresses of the Elbe.

often dearly purchased amidst the accumulated horrors of famine, contagion, and mortality. The immense number of wounded who had been brought into the hospitals of that city since the campaign recommenced, had not only filled all the public establishments, but a great number of private houses, with the sick and the maimed; and although death had fearfully thinned their ranks, often at the rate of two hundred a-day, yet fifteen thousand were still heaped together in such a state of misery as to engender the never-failing accompaniment of human woe, a typhus fever of the most malignant kind. In this state of wretchedness they were when the general retreat of the army from Silesia and the Bohemian frontier, in the end of September, suddenly filled the city with thirty thousand fresh troops, besides twice as many quartered in the environs, upwards of two-thirds of whom were in a state of the most deplorable destitution. The accumulation of men and horses in a narrow space, and consequent spread of contagion, were then prodigiously augmented. In vain the most severe orders were issued by the Emperor—one in particular, that every tenth marauder should be shot[1]—to arrest the progress of disbanding and wandering on the part of the troops; the necessities of their situation, the confusion which prevailed, the thirst for gain and enjoyment, with the continual prospect of death before their eyes, rendered the men utterly indifferent to all such precautions.* The distribution of rations of meat had become rare, those of bread were reduced a half; and nearly the whole army, with the exception of the Guards, were compelled to forage indi-

[1] Orders of Sept. 5.

* "The recent movements of the Grand Army had entirely exhausted the last resources of the country; and the soldier, having no longer the excitement of combat to distract his misery, felt it the more keenly. To all verbal complaints on this head, the answer always was, 'Cause the commissary to be shot, and you will want for nothing.' To the written reclamations an invitation was given to apply for orders or decorations, these being more easy to supply than bread. At this moment, the Emperor sent a decree by which the town of Pirna, at that moment at the lowest point of misery itself, should furnish us with six thousand rations of bread a-day."—St-Cyr, iv. 178.

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vidually for their own subsistence. This system, which did admirably well as long as the French armies were continually advancing in the career of victory, to hitherto untouched fields of plunder, told against them with crushing but well-deserved severity, now that they were thrown back by defeat upon the exhausted theatre of former devastation. It was the counterpart of the compulsory retreat by the wasted line of the Smolensko road.[1]

[1] Odel. ii. 196, 197, Témoin Oculaire. Plotho, ii. 216.

111. Dreadful effects of these circumstances in the French army.

Often a hundred men were crowded together in huts intended only for a single family, and that of the humblest rank; men and horses, soldiers and marauders, camp-followers and prostitutes, were shut up together, half famished, and eagerly snatching from each other the plunder which they had wrenched from the miserable inhabitants. Even the hospitals of the insane had been seized on for lodging, and the lunatics turned out without the slightest means of subsistence, in pursuance of Napoleon's inhuman order, "to turn out the mad."* The wonted spirit of the soldiers was entirely broken by the sombre aspect and protracted fatigues of the campaign, and, above all, by the exhausting marches and countermarches which came to no result. Their discontent broke out in open murmurs, and their despondency exhaled in bitter and graphic terms in their correspondence with their relations in France, great part of which was taken by the partisan corps in the rear, and fell into the hands of the Allies.† It may be conceived how the bonds of discipline were relaxed, how the progress of contagion was accelerated, among multitudes thus cooped up together, under circumstances of such physical privation and mental

* "Depuis plusieurs mois il y avait à Sonnenstein, près de Pirna, une maison de santé pour les insensés. Le 14 Sept. elle fut tout-à-coup évacuée et convertie en une forteresse. Le directeur de l'établissement obtint pour toute réponse du chef suprême, 'Qu'on chasse les fous.' Le major chargé de prendre possession du château, rendit encore plus dure, par la rigueur des mesures qu'il prit, l'exécution de cet acte de violence."—ODELEBEN, *Témoin Oculaire*, ii. 200.

† The following are a few of the extracts:—"Two years in succession of such torments exceed the limits of human strength." Another,—"I am worn

depression. The diminution experienced in the effective force of the French army from these causes, was far greater than that occasioned by capture, or the sword of the enemy. From official documents it appears, that the total number of military inmates who were quartered on the inhabitants of Dresden and its suburbs from the 15th June to the 15th November in this year, amounted to the enormous, and, if not proved by authentic evidence, incredible number of five million sixty-two thousand eight hundred and seventy-one persons,* a result which can only be explained by recollecting how frequently armies of a hundred thousand men, with their followers, passed through its gates during that disastrous period. And, from equally certain evidence, it is proved that the military force at the disposal of Napoleon, which, on the termination of the armistice, amounted to nearly three hundred and sixty thousand men present with the eagles, had, by the end of September, a period of only six weeks, sunk down to less than two hundred thousand combatants.[1]†

[1] Die Grosse Chron. i. 644, 645. Odel. ii. 196, 197, Lond. 140.

112. Comparatively comfortable condition of the Allied troops.

On the other hand, the condition of the Allies, since the struggle commenced, had sensibly ameliorated. They had lost, indeed, by sickness, prisoners, and the sword, above eighty thousand men since hostilities were renewed; but this number, great as it was, would be nearly replaced by Benningsen's army, which was now advancing by rapid strides across Silesia, and which crossed the Elbe on the 25th, and reached Töplitz in the beginning of October. Their troops were incomparably more healthy than the French. With the exception of the advance to Dresden in the end of August, when the fatigue had been excessive,

out with this life; continually exposed to fatigue and danger, without any appearance of a termination." A third,—"Louis is there, wounded and a prisoner: this, then, is the end of military honours; this is the issue of our prosperity." A fourth,—"Such a one has been killed: if this continue, every one will be killed: such as survive one campaign will be cut down in the next." FAIN, ii. 374, 375.

* See App. A, Chap. LXXX.; and ODELEBEN, *Témoin Oculaire*, 237.

† See App. B, Chap. LXXX.; and LORD BURGHERSH'S *War in Germany*, 316, App. No. 2.

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the soldiers had not been exposed to any considerable hardships. Comfortably hutted or lodged in Bohemia, the grand Allied army was able, by the advance of a few corps to a short distance on the frontier, to put the flower of the French troops in motion, and bring back Napoleon's Guards, in breathless haste, from the extremity of Silesia to the summit of the Erzgebirge. Their wants, purveyed for by the wealth of England in the immense circle of Germany in their rear, were amply supplied : rations were regularly served out to the men ; and the necessity of providing for their own necessities, so fatal to military discipline and subordination, was almost unknown. The enthusiastic spirit and signal success of the troops preserved them from mental depression ; the sick and wounded were attended to in the rear, where contagion was not fostered by multitudes, and the kindly feelings of the peasantry alleviated the evils they had undergone : while the universal exhilaration and spirit which prevailed, served as a balm to the wounds of those who had been injured, and sent them back in an incredibly short time to the ranks of war.[1]

[1] Lond. 139, 140. Bout. 88. Die Grosse Chron. i. 646, 647.

## CHAPTER LXXXI.

### BATTLES OF LEIPSIC.

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1. General view of the position of the parties at this period.

If the military position of the two parties were alone considered, it would be hard to say in favour of which, at this period, the scales of fortune were likely to preponderate. The French, it is true, had lost a hundred and sixty thousand men, since the termination of the armistice; they had been defeated in three pitched battles; and their troops, severely straitened in their quarters, had suffered grievously from privation and famine. But still their line of defence was unbroken. Six weeks' fighting on a scale of unprecedented magnitude, had not driven them from their stronghold in the centre of Germany; and of all the great fortresses which they held on the Elbe, not one had been wrested from their arms. Napoleon in person had never ceased to be victorious: a triumph worthy of being placed beside Austerlitz and Friedland had already graced his arms; the ample circle of his enemies never ventured to withstand the shock of his cuirassiers; and the losses of the Allies, though not so great as his own, had yet been so considerable as to reduce them for some weeks to a defensive system. Above all, he held a central position, and ruled with undivided and despotic authority; whereas they acted on an immense circumference, and were directed by independent cabinets and generals of different nations, whose mutual jealousies had already wellnigh broken up the

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alliance, and who could not be expected to work together if a disaster similar to that of Dresden should again befall their arms. So strongly did these advantageous circumstances impress the Emperor's mind, and such was the confidence which he still had in his star, that he wrote, at the moment of leaving Dresden to engage the Allies at Leipsic, that he was about to gain a glorious victory.*

2. Advantages of each.

So many chances did these circumstances afford in favour of the French Emperor, that, if this had been an ordinary war, it is more than probable that he would have extricated himself from all his difficulties; and that another victory would, as at Wagram or Friedland, have reinstated his affairs, and again prostrated the whole Continental states. His situation after Eylau or Aspern was seemingly more hopeless than now on the Elbe: and his prospects were then more unfavourable; for the family connexion with Austria rendered it more than probable, that means might be found by concessions, or facilities procured by disaster, to detach that power altogether from the alliance. But this was not an ordinary war, and a spirit was now abroad upon the earth which overruled the decisions of cabinets, and mastered the movements of generals. The unbounded enthusiasm and the profound exasperation of Germany formed an element of unexampled importance in the strife, and, like a mighty stream, swept all lesser obstacles before it. Governments could not restrain their people: willing or unwilling, they were compelled to join in the crusade for the deliverance of the Fatherland. This generous and noble spirit had penetrated into the recesses of courts, and subdued all selfish feelings—alike in the leaders of armies and the

* "L'Empereur va livrer bataille. Dresde sera occupée par trente mille hommes. Si S. M. perd la bataille, elle fera evacuer la place; mais *comme S. M. gagnera la bataille,* Dresde restera toujours son centre d'opérations. Comme sur cent chances S. M. croit en avoir quatre-vingts pour elle, il faut agir comme si elle devait réussir."—*Note dictée par l'Empereur à* M. Le Comte Daru, *Oct.* 7, 1813. Bignon, xii. 341, 342.

rulers of nations. It was felt equally in the cabinet and the cottage: it stilled the jealousies of sovereigns, and animated the courage of armies. This it was which held in indissoluble bonds the discordant elements of the Grand Alliance; this it was which filled all the chasms in their ranks by gallant multitudes pressing forward to the strife. Nor were material resources awanting; for the last reserve of Russia, nearly sixty thousand strong,* under Benningsen, was approaching, and to it Napoleon had no corresponding force to oppose; every sabre and bayonet at his disposal was already on the Elbe.

3. Plan of the Allies at this period.

Atlas, Plate 85.

The arrival of this great force at Töplitz, on the 1st October, where it was reviewed, and found to be in a very efficient state, with the addition of eight thousand Prussians to Kleist's corps, raised the Russian and Prussian armies in Bohemia, after all their losses, to eighty thousand effective men in the field, exclusive of the Austrians, who were fully seventy thousand. This was the signal for the re-commencement of great operations. The Allied sovereigns were at first inclined to have gone into Schwartzenberg's plan, which was to have called Blucher's army, as well as that of Benningsen, into Bohemia, and acted by one line, by Kommotau and Chemnitz, on Leipsic, so as to intercept altogether the communications of the French army, and compel them to fight their way through two hundred and thirty thousand men back to the Rhine. But this would have left on Bernadotte's hands a force which he could not attempt to resist, if the enemy chose to cross the Elbe with all his forces, and carry the war into the hitherto untouched fields of Prussia, whereby Berlin would inevitably be taken. In addition to this, difficulties almost insuperable were experienced when the proposal was mooted to place Blucher and the Silesian army under the immediate direction of the Austrian commander-in-chief. They had hitherto

* 57,329 men, of whom 12,886 were cavalry and Cossacks, and 198 guns. —Plotho; Beilage, vii. 63, 69.

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done very well at a distance, and when each obeyed the commands of his respective sovereign; but it was very doubtful whether this harmony would continue if they were brought into immediate and personal collision. Little cordial co-operation could be expected from the hussar-like energy of the Prussian veteran and the methodical circumspection of the Austrian commander; and Blucher himself, whose opinion, age, and great services were entitled to respect, had expressed his disinclination to any such arrangement. It was, therefore, resolved to descend with the grand army of Bohemia and Benningsen's corps alone into the plains of Leipsic; and to unite Blucher's army to that of the Prince-Royal, which would form a mass of a hundred and fifty thousand men, capable, it was hoped, either of arresting any advance of the enemy in the direction of Berlin, or of co-operating in a general and decisive attack on his forces in the Saxon plains.[1]

[1] Jom. iv. 432, 433. Bout. 92. Lond. 142. Plotho, ii. 237. Better, i. 147.

4. Movements of Blucher across the Elbe in conformity with this plan of operations. Oct. 2.

The different corps of the Allies forthwith received orders in conformity to these views. Blucher, as usual, was the first in motion. Leaving the division of Prince Czorbatoff at Bautzen to cover Lusatia from the incursions of the garrison of Dresden, he marched with the remainder of his forces, about sixty-five thousand strong, towards the Elbe, and reached Elsterwerda, while the French corps there crossed at Meissen. To deceive the enemy, he caused Sacken's advanced guard to attack the *tête-de-pont* at that place; and, while their attention was forcibly drawn to that point, he himself marched rapidly by Herzberg and Jessen, and on the night of the 2d October reached the Elbe, at the mouth of the Schwarze Elster. Bridges were thrown across with incredible expedition, and the operation was conducted with the most signal ability. Such was the activity of all concerned in it, and the admirable arrangements made for its completion, that by six next morning half the army was across without experiencing the slightest

opposition. Bertrand's corps, however, mustering eighteen thousand combatants, was strongly intrenched at Wartenburg, at a short distance from the river, and Blucher could not advance without forcing this position. He commenced the attack, accordingly, at eight o'clock with the troops which had effected the passage; and after six hours' hard fighting, drove the enemy from their position, with the loss of six hundred prisoners and an equal number killed and wounded, though the loss of the Prussians, who were alone engaged, was hardly less considerable. On the following day, the remainder of the army effected its passage without opposition, and Blucher, moving forward, established his headquarters at Düben.[1]

[1] Bout. 93, 94. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 118, 119. Jom. iv. 433. Die Grosse Chron. i. 645, 646.

5. Movements of Bernadotte and Schwartzenberg.

At the same time the Prince-Royal of Sweden crossed the Elbe without any resistance, the Russians at Ackow, the Swedes at Roslau, where headquarters were immediately established. His advanced posts were pushed forward, so as to enter into communication with Blucher from Düben; and on the day following, Bulow and Tauenzein were also crossed over, leaving Thumen only, with fourteen thousand men, to continue the siege or blockade of Wittenberg. Ney, whose army was so reduced that he had under his immediate command only Reynier's corps, now not more than twelve thousand strong, was in no condition to make head against forces so considerable: he therefore evacuated Dessau, and retreated by Bitterfeld towards Leipsic, summoning Bertrand to join his standard. At the same time the grand Allied army began to defile by its left through the mountains, to penetrate into Saxony by the route of Sebastiansberg and Chemnitz. Colloredo remained at Töplitz to guard the magazines there, and Benningsen continued in the same place, but for a few days only, to rest his soldiers after their long march across Germany. The reserve of that army, under Prince Labanoff, which had now entirely come up, presented striking marks of the prodigious efforts which Russia had made to recruit

Oct. 4. Oct. 5. Oct. 6. Oct. 1.

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her forces. A great number of Tartars and Bashkirs were to be found in its ranks, who had come from the Lake Baikal and the frontiers of China, and some of whom were armed with their primitive weapons of bows and arrows. On the 3d October, the advanced guard, under Klenau, reached Chemnitz, where it was attacked, at first with success, by Prince Poniatowski at the head of his gallant Poles. But the indefatigable Platoff appeared on the flank of the victors as they were pursuing their advantages, and compelled them to make a precipitate retreat to Mitweyda. Next day headquarters were advanced to Marienberg; a hundred thousand men had already entered the Saxon plains from Bohemia, while a hundred and thirty thousand had crossed the Elbe, under Blucher and Bernadotte, to encircle the French Emperor.[1]

[1] Better, i. 147. Plotho, ii. 237. Bout. 95, 96. Jom. iv. 433. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 119. Fain, ii. 363, 366. Die Grosse Chron. i. 649, 650.

6. Napoleon's views at this period.

While the vast armies of the Allies, acting upon an immense circle, and directed by consummate judgment, were thus drawing round the French army, and preparing to crush it in the position it had so long maintained on the banks of the Elbe, Napoleon, for the first time in his life, remained without any fixed plan, and watching merely the course of events to select his point of attack. When he had regained Dresden, after his last abortive expedition against Blucher, he said, "I will not go out again; I will wait." In effect, he rested on his oars for ten days, constantly expecting his enemies to commit some fault which would give him an opportunity of striking with effect. He summoned up Augereau with his newly-raised corps, about fifteen thousand strong, to Leipsic from Mayence, though it had barely completed its military formation. At length, however, the losses sustained by the partisan warfare in his rear, and the frightful progress of famine and disease in Dresden, Torgau, and the other fortresses on the Elbe, rendered it indispensable for the French army to move. The Emperor had no alternative but to do so, or see his forces melt

away and sink to the last stage of weakness before his eyes without firing a shot. The rapid march of Blucher to the Elbe ; the passage of that river by Bernadotte at Roslau ; the movements of the grand army towards Kommotau and Chemnitz—all indicated a determination on the part of the Allies to hem him in on every side, and possibly renew on the banks of the Elbe the catastrophe of the Beresina. Napoleon felt his danger ; and, calling St-Cyr to his cabinet at midnight on the 6th October, he thus expressed himself upon the prospects of the campaign.[1]

[1] St-Cyr, iv. 178, 185.

7. His admirable views expressed to St-Cyr.

" I am going to leave Dresden," said he, " and I shall take Vandamme's and your own corps with me. I am certainly about to engage in a decisive battle : if I gain it, I shall regret not having had my whole forces at my disposal to profit by it ; if, on the other hand, I experience a reverse, you will be of no use to me in the battle ; and, shut up here, you will be lost without resource. Besides, what is Dresden now to me ? It can no longer be considered as the pivot of the army, which is unable to find subsistence in the exhausted country which surrounds it. As little can it be considered as a great depot ; for there remain in it only provisions for a few days : almost all the stores of ammunition are exhausted, and what little remains may be distributed among the soldiers. There are at Dresden twelve thousand sick and wounded ; but they will almost all die, being the remains of sixty thousand who have entered the hospitals since the opening of the campaign. When winter sets in, the Elbe no longer affords a position : being frozen, it can be passed at every point. I am about to take up another position, which is defensible at every point. I shall throw back my right as far as Erfurth, support my left by Magdeburg, and my centre by the heights forming the left bank of the Saale, which form a material bulwark, at all times capable of arresting an enemy. Magdeburg will become to me another Dresden : it is a noble fortress, which can be left

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as long as necessary to its own resources, without the risk of seeing it carried, as Dresden might have been during the three days that the Allies were before its suburbs, if they had been commanded by a man of capacity. Dresden can never be made a strong place, without destroying the vast suburbs which at present constitute the chief part of that beautiful capital. In addition to this, it would require to be re-stored with ammunition and provisions, and it is now impossible to introduce them. In fine, I wish to change my position. Dresden is too near Bohemia; no sooner have I left it, even upon the shortest expedition, than the enemy are before its walls; and I have not the means of preventing that by threatening their rear. By the more distant position which I propose to take, I will be in a situation to direct great strokes against them, and force them to a durable peace." St-Cyr expressed his entire concurrence in these lucid and masterly opinions; and he was dismissed with the assurance that next morning he would receive the requisite formal order for the destruction of the blockhouses, palisades, and exterior fortifications of Dresden, and the evacuation of its stores upon Magdeburg.[1]

[1] St-Cyr, iv. 186, 188.

8. Napoleon alters his plan, sets out to join Ney, and leaves St-Cyr at Dresden. Oct. 7.

Early next morning Napoleon set out from Dresden, and had a conference with Murat at Meissen. But instead of then following out the plan he had formed, and transmitting the instructions he had promised to St-Cyr, for the evacuation of the capital, he totally altered his views, transmitted orders to that general to hold it to the last extremity, and placed under his orders his own and the remains of Vandamme's corps, about thirty thousand sabres and bayonets, besides twelve thousand sick and wounded, who encumbered the hospitals. With the bulk of his forces the Emperor marched to the northward, with the intention of joining the army of Ney in the vicinity of Torgau, and resuming his favourite project of an attack on Berlin; not without the hope that he would succeed, with his army in a central position between Bernadotte

and Blucher, in separating the one of these commanders from the other, and beating them both in succession. To cover his communications, and keep in check the grand Allied army, which was now fast issuing from Bohemia towards Leipsic, by Marienberg and Chemnitz, he detached Murat, with fifty thousand men, composed of the corps of Victor, Lauriston, and Poniatowski, to Freyberg, with instructions to retard the advance of the enemy as long as possible, and when he could no longer keep his ground, to retire towards Leipsic and the Upper Mulde.* The Imperial Guard and cavalry, with Macdonald's and Marmont's corps, followed the standards of the Emperor, and, joined to the corps of Oudinot, Bertrand, and Reynier, under Ney, formed a mass of a hundred and twenty-five thousand men, with which he proposed to strike the redoutable blows which he meditated in the direction of Berlin. The King of Saxony, with his family and court, left Dresden in the suite of the Emperor. It was a mournful sight when the long train of carriages, amidst the tears of the inhabitants, defiled through the streets, and the sovereign, leaving his beloved capital to the horrors of an inevitable siege, set out a suppliant or a captive in the ranks of war.[1]†

[1] Fain, ii. 366, 367. Norvins, Recueil de 1813; ii. 371, 372. Jom. iv. 434. Odel. ii. 210, 211.

The rapid evacuation of the right bank of the Elbe, in pursuance of these orders for the concentration of the

* Napoleon's instructions to Murat, which explained his views at this period, were in these terms:—"I have raised the siege of Wittenberg: I have separated the corps of Sacken from that of Langeron and York: Augereau this evening will be at Lützen or Leipsic, and Arrighi has orders to join him, which will bring you a reinforcement of at least 30,000 men. One of two things will happen: either I will attack the enemy to-morrow and beat him, or, if he retires, I will burn the bridges over the Elbe. Then you will do what you can to preserve Leipsic, so as to give me time to beat the army of Silesia; but if you are obliged to quit Leipsic, you should direct your course to the Mulde: the bridges of Düben and Eilenburg are guarded. My intention is to pass over to the right bank of the Elbe, and to manœuvre between Magdeburg and Dresden, debouching by one of my four places on that river to surprise the enemy."—See JOMINI'S *Vie de Napoleon*, iv. 435, 436.

† Napoleon's notes on the position of the French and the Allies, and the different plans which he had entertained for the conduct of the campaign at this critical juncture, are very curious and instructive.—See Appendix, A, Chap. LXXXI.; and NORVINS, *Recueil de* 1813, ii. 366.

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9. Who is there surrounded by the enemy.

army, prevented the execution to the letter of the rigorous orders of Napoleon, which were "to carry off all the cattle, burn the woods, and destroy the fruit-trees." The officers intrusted with the execution of this inhuman order found various excuses for not obeying it, and, in general, had not time to execute instructions which would have reduced a large part of Saxony, where they had been treated with so much hospitality, to a desert wilderness. The rapid approach of the Allied armies, who covered the whole right bank of the river, and were already descending from the Bohemian hills by Pirna and Sonnenstein, threw back the numerous swarm of stragglers whom the French had left behind them. Dresden was speedily invested on all sides; and numerous covered boats, laden with crowds of sick and wounded, in the last stage of weakness and contagion, were daily arriving within its walls. Nothing could be more revolting than the conduct of the French military to these miserable wretches, when there was no longer any prospect of their being serviceable in the campaign. A soldier, in the last stage of dysentery, was found lying by the roadside, almost buried in a dunghill, and uttering the most piteous cries. One said in passing, "That is no business of ours;" another, "I have no orders on the subject." An officer came up, and exclaimed—"He is not to be pitied—he is about to die."[1]

[1] Témoin Oculaire, ii. 212, 213. Odel. ii. 213.

10. Napoleon advances against Blucher, who joins Bernadotte.

As soon as Napoleon was informed of the passage of the Elbe by the Prince-Royal, he determined to interpose between his army and that of Silesia, and, if possible, crush one or other before any assistance could be obtained. With this view he pushed on at the head of a hundred and twenty-five thousand men. The French army being concentrated, had the fairest prospect of falling on the detached columns of Blucher's army, which were marching across from the Elbe, in the direction of Bernadotte's forces. Langeron and York alone were at the headquarters at Düben, Sacken being between Eilenburg and

Torgau. So late was the Prussian general of receiving information of the approach of danger, that it was only by a sudden decision and immediate movement that he extricated himself from his perilous situation. On the 9th he passed the Mulde, and by forced marches joined Bernadotte with all his forces, late on the evening of the 10th, at Zörbig. On the same day Napoleon established his headquarters at Düben, which Blucher had left the morning before. So near was Sacken being cut off, that in following the wake of Blucher towards Düben on the evening of the 9th, he found the town already occupied by the French advanced guard, and only got on by filing to his right, and making a detour by the village of Sokana, where he passed the night.[1]

Oct. 9.

Oct. 10.

[1] Bout. 97, 98. Jom. iv. 436, 437. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 120, 121. Fain, ii. 369, 370. Plotho, ii. 253, 257.

11. The Allies march to the west and pass Napoleon, who prepares to cross the Elbe and invade Prussia.

The decisive crisis was now approaching: every moment was precious; the fate of Europe hung in the balance, suspended almost even; a feather would make it incline either way. Both parties adopted equally bold resolutions; and it was hard to say which would be first pierced to the heart in the desperate thrusts that were about to be exchanged. Each army had passed the other, and lay in great strength upon his opponent's communications. Blucher and Bernadotte at Zörbig were between Napoleon and the Rhine, while he at Düben was between them and the Elbe. Both thought that, by threatening their adversary's communications, they would draw him back or reduce him to the defensive, and both acted on this principle. On the 11th the Prince-Royal and Blucher, leaving Thumen before Wittenberg, and Tauenzein at Dessau, to guard the passage of the Elbe, instead of returning towards the Elbe, marched still further to the south-west, and established themselves at Halle and Rothenburg, directly between Napoleon and the Rhine, and in such a situation that they could open up a communication across the plain of Saxony with the Grand Army descending from Bohemia. Napoleon, on his part, pushed forward Reynier to Wittenberg, and

Oct. 10.

Oct. 11.

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Ney to Dessau, which threatened his adversaries' communications with Berlin. The former, with the aid of the garrison of the besieged fortress, speedily raised the siege of Wittenberg, and drove Thumen, who commanded the blockading force, before him towards Roslau; while Tauenzein, finding himself in no condition to make head against Ney at Dessau, fell back with considerable loss to the same place, and, after breaking down the bridge over the Elbe, continued his retreat by Zerbst, towards Potsdam and Berlin. Napoleon was highly elated with these advantages, and, seeing the road to that capital open before him, entertained more sanguine hopes than ever of carrying the war into the heart of the Prussian territory, rallying to his standard the besieged garrisons on the Oder, and establishing his winter quarters, supported by Torgau, Magdeburg, and Wittenberg, in the hitherto untouched fields of northern Germany.[1]*

Oct. 12. [1] Bout. 98, 99. Napoleon to St-Cyr, Oct. 10, 1813, Jom. iv. 436. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 120, 121. Vaud. i. 196, 197. Die Grosse Chron. i. 555, 659.

12. False movement of Bernadotte towards the Elbe.

Although, however, Napoleon did not prosecute his projected movement upon Berlin, and even withdrew Reynier back to Wittenberg, yet his demonstrations against that capital had the effect of withdrawing Bernadotte from his true line of operations, and endangering in the last degree the army of Silesia. On the 12th October, he detached himself from Blucher, recrossed the Saale, and moved back towards the Elbe as far as Köthen. The forces under his command, however, as Tauenzein was on the other side of that river, did not exceed fifty thousand combatants, with which he could never have hoped to stop Napoleon at the head of a hundred and twenty thousand; while the separation seriously endangered Blucher, whose communications were now entirely cut off, and who had lost a considerable

* Napoleon at this period wrote to St-Cyr:—"I have raised the siege of Wittenberg: the army of Silesia is in full retreat by the left bank; to-morrow I will compel it to receive battle, or abandon the bridges of Dessau and Wartenberg. I shall then probably pass over to the right bank with all my army; and it is by the right bank I shall return to Dresden."—NAPOLEON *to* ST-CYR, 11*th October* 1813; JOMINI, iv. 436.

part of his baggage by the operations of the French light horse on his rear. Bernadotte's true policy would have been to have continued united to Blucher, who had so gallantly made his way to him through many dangers across the Elbe. Their united force, a hundred and thirty thousand strong, might not only have bid defiance to Napoleon, but would have entirely cut him off from the Rhine, and rendered his retreat to France, or even Holland, impossible. But it was already apparent that the royal ex-marshal of France had no disposition to push matters to extremities with France, and that he had secret views of ambition which rendered him unwilling to do anything that might alienate the affections of its inhabitants.[1]

[1] Bout. 150. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 121, 122. Vaud. i. 197, 198. Plotho, ii. 239. Die Grosse Chron. i. 660, 661.

13. Advance of the grand Allied army towards Leipsic. Oct. 6.

Meanwhile, however, the grand Allied army was not idle. Issuing from the defiles of the Bohemian mountains, Klenau, on the extreme left, pushed as far as Penig on the 6th, on the direct road to Leipsic, while Wittgenstein on the right reached Altenburg on the same day. At the same time, Murat marched from Freyberg to Oderau—a central position at the foot of the high mountains, well calculated at once to maintain his connexion with the garrison of Dresden, and keep in check the advancing columns. On the day following, Schwartzenberg moved his headquarters, with the bulk of his army, to Chemnitz; and although Murat, Poniatowski, and Victor exerted themselves to the utmost, and the Poles even regained Penig, and drove back Klenau to a considerable distance, yet the continued approach of the vast masses of the Allies on all the roads turned all the positions which they took up, and compelled them to fall back towards Leipsic. It was impossible that fifty thousand men could maintain themselves against a hundred and twenty thousand. The Austrians, constantly pressing forward, gained ground in every quarter,[2] and on the night of the 9th, their advanced guard, under Prince Maurice of Lichtenstein and Thielman, surprised Wetlau,

Oct. 7.

[2] Die Grosse Chron. i. 660, 661. Plotho, ii. 239. Bout. 103, 104. Vaud. i. 198, 199. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 123, 124. Odel. ii. 17, 18.

Oct. 8.

Oct. 9.

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between Naumburg and Weissenfels, and on the direct road from Leipsic to Mayence. This movement in advance, however, which, by destroying the French communications, would have been of the very highest importance if effected by a large body of the Allies, totally failed in its effect from the insufficiency of the means employed.

14. The Austrians fail in cutting off the French communications. Oct. 10. Ott. 12.

Augereau, who was hurrying up by forced marches to Leipsic, next morning attacked them with great vigour, and not only cleared the road, but defeated the Allied advanced guard with considerable loss. On the 12th, with fifteen thousand men, he entered Leipsic, where a considerable concentration of troops had already taken place. On the Allied right, Wittgenstein continued to advance, though not without experiencing considerable resistance, and after several severe combats with Murat's cavalry. The forward movement, however, of the Allied right, rendered the King of Naples' position at Oderau no longer tenable, and he was obliged to fall back along the course of the Tchoppa to Mitweyda. On all sides the Allied forces were approaching Leipsic, and already their advanced posts were within sight of that city. On the same day on which Augereau entered it, Giulay made himself master of Weissenfels, on the road to France from Leipsic, where he captured twelve hundred sick and wounded; and, two days afterwards, Schwartzenberg made a reconnoissance with the corps of Klenau and Wittgenstein, which led to a severe action between three thousand of Murat's horse and Pahlen's dragoons, which, after several gallant charges, terminated in the overthrow of the French by the surpassing valour of sixteen squadrons of Prussian cuirassiers.[1]

Oct. 14.

[1] Vict. et Conq. xxii. 123, 125. Bout. 103, 104. Vaud. i. 199, 200. Norvins, Recueil de 1813; ii. 380. Die Grosse Chron. i. 663, 667. Better, i. 154, 155.

15. Desperate cavalry action between Pahlen and Murat.

The Russian cavalry on this occasion were overwhelmed by the great superiority of the enemy, and would have been destroyed had it not been for the brilliant charge of the Prussian cuirassiers, who threw themselves upon the enemy, in the midst of their triumph, with the most

determined courage. When Colonel Boutourlin, Alexander's aide-de-camp, expressed to an officer engaged in it the high admiration which he felt at witnessing their gallant bearing, the brave Prussian replied, "Comrade, could we do less? this is the anniversary of the battle of Jena." In the course of this desperate cavalry encounter, six regiments of cuirassiers, fifteen hundred strong in all, which had come up with Augereau, and had recently arrived from Spain, were almost totally destroyed. Murat, who threw himself with his wonted gallantry upon the enemy, was on the point of being made prisoner. When the Prussian cuirassiers broke those of France in the close of the day, he was obliged to flee, closely pursued by the enemy; and an officer who headed the pursuit, almost touching the monarch, repeatedly called out, "Stop, stop, king!" A faithful follower of Joachim passed his sword through the pursuer's body, and so effected the monarch's deliverance; for which he was made an esquire of the king on the spot, and next day received the decoration of the Legion of Honour from Napoleon.[1]

[1] Bout. 106. Odel. ii. 18. Better, i. 160, 161. Die Grosse Chron. i. 670, 674.

16. Napoleon's project for carrying the war into Prussia.

While the vast masses of the Allies were thus in all directions converging towards Leipsic, Napoleon remained inactive at Düben, waiting the concentration of his corps to carry into execution the plan which he had so long meditated, of transferring the war to the Prussian territory, and, under the protection of the strong places which he still held on the Elbe and the Oder, maintaining the contest in the space hitherto untouched between these two rivers.* When he came to propose this bold design,

* "The plan of the Emperor was to have allowed the Allies to advance into the territory between the Elbe and the Saale, and then, manœuvring under protection of the fortresses and magazines of Dresden, Torgau, Wittenberg, and Hamburg, to have carried the war into the territory between the Elbe and the Oder, on which latter river France still held Glogau, Stettin, and Cüstrin; and, according to circumstances, to have raised the blockade of Dantzic, Zamosc, and Modlin, on the Vistula. Such was the success which might have been expected from that vast plan, that the Coalition would have been disorganised by it."—NAPOLEON in MONTHOLON, ii. 125.

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however, to his marshals, he experienced a unanimous and most determined resistance. They were not equally sanguine with the Emperor as to the success of future operations; they had experienced the inability of their troops to contend with the Allies when the animating effect of his presence was no longer felt; and they not unnaturally entertained the greatest dread of plunging, with two hundred and fifty thousand men, into the north of Germany, when four hundred thousand Allied troops were prepared to interpose between them and the Rhine, and cut them off entirely from their communications with the French empire.[1]

[1] Fain, ii. 372. Jom. iv. 438. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 121, 122.

17. Which is opposed by his marshals, and their reasons for so doing.

Granting that they would find provisions for a considerable period in the fields of northern Prussia, and shelter from the fortresses of the Elbe and the Oder, of which they still retained possession, how were they to get ammunition and military stores for so vast a host in the plains of Brandenburg, or forage for their cavalry amidst the clouds of light horse by which they would speedily be enveloped? In the desperate strife in which they would be engaged, when each party threw himself upon his enemy's communications, and disregarded his own, was it not probable that two hundred and fifty thousand would be crushed by four hundred thousand, and the party inferior in light horse by the one which had so great a superiority in that formidable arm? Above all, what would the Allies lose by the war being transferred into Prussia but Berlin, and the warlike resources, now nearly exhausted, of that realm?—they still retained Austria, Silesia, and southern Germany, from which they could derive all their supplies. But if the French were irrevocably cut off from the Rhine, a few weeks' warfare, such as that which had recently occurred, would exhaust all their resources; and the very magnitude of their forces would the sooner paralyse them, from the failure of all the muniments of war.[2]

[2] Jom. iv. 438, 439. Fain, ii. 372, 373. Las Cases, vi. 38, 40. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 121, 122.

Notwithstanding these obvious considerations, Napoleon

18. Napoleon's interview with his marshals, and reasons for advancing to Berlin.

was strongly bent upon carrying his bold project into execution; and the four days that he spent at Düben, endeavouring to overcome the repugnance of his marshals, and revolving in his mind the probable risks and advantages of the undertaking, were among the most gloomy and painful of his life. "When the intentions of the Emperor," says Caulaincourt, "to cross the Elbe, and carry the war into Prussia, became known, there was a general explosion of murmurs in the army, 'Are we then,' said they, 'to recommence a levy of bucklers in Prussia, and go and bury the remains of the army at Berlin? Has he not yet slaughtered enough? This will never come to an end. It is too late to adventure on this perilous campaign. Had he replaced us on the Rhine, we should have found winter-quarters; and in spring, if necessary, have resumed the offensive. We have had enough of fighting: we must regain France.' I was in the saloon of the Emperor when the staff in a body came to supplicate him to abandon his projects on Berlin, and march on Leipsic. No one who did not witness that deplorable scene, can conceive what he suffered in that moment. The reasons they advanced were futile in the extreme. He remained cold and reserved. 'My plan,' replied he, 'has been deeply calculated: I have admitted into it, as a probable contingency, the defection of Bavaria: I am convinced that the plan of marching on Berlin is good. A retrograde movement, in the circumstances in which we are placed, is a disastrous step; and those who oppose my projects have taken on them a serious responsibility—I will think on it, gentlemen.' With these words he re-entered his cabinet, and remained the whole remainder of the day wrapped in thought, silent and moody. The weather was sombre and cold: the wind blew with violence, and moaned through the vast corridors of the ancient chateau of Düben, and its old leaden-cased windows trembled in their sockets.[1] Everything in that mournful residence bore the character of profound

[1] Caul. Souvenirs, ii. 261, 263.

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melancholy." It is interesting to recollect that a similar storm attended the decisive debate in the National Assembly of France on the 17th June 1789, when the sovereignty of the nation was assumed, the monarchy overthrown, and the march of the Revolution rendered inevitable.[1]

[1] *Ante*, ch. iv. § 53,

19. Defection of Bavaria, which overturns his project. Oct. 12.

In spite of all the obstacles which the marshals threw in his way, it is probable that the Emperor would have ventured on the movement immediately, had not news arrived on the 12th, which rendered it impossible. The cabinet of Munich, which, ever since the war began in Germany, had been besieged with entreaties on the part of its subjects to abandon the Confederation of the Rhine and join the alliance against France, had long continued firm to its engagements, and even testified great joy on his triumph at Dresden.* But the victories of Culm, the Katzbach, and Dennewitz renewed its vacillation, and at length the torrent of feeling in Germany became too strong to be resisted. Accordingly, at length, notwithstanding its strong partiality for Napoleon, and natural gratitude for the benefits he had conferred upon Bavaria, it was compelled to yield. A treaty had been signed at Ried, on the 8th October, which had secured the accession of that state to the Grand Alliance. This important event, which the Emperor had foreseen, as he had been forewarned of it by the King of Bavaria, but which was not equally expected by the army, gave great additional weight to the arguments of the marshals who urged a return to France. "By this inconceivable defection of Bavaria," said they, "the question is entirely changed; we must look forward to the other defections which will follow. Würtemberg, Baden, and Darmstadt will be

* "Une lettre de la Reine de Saxe, sœur du Roi de Bavarie, écrite dans l'enthousiasme du premier moment après la bataille de Dresde, respirait la joie la plus sincère. Les mots, 'notre cher Empereur' s'y trouvaient plusieurs fois répétés. Le Roi de Bavarie lui-même, croyant d'abord la Coalition abattue par cette victoire, en parut d'autant plus satisfait qu'il n'avait pas eu le temps de se compromettre vis-à-vis à l'Empereur."—BIGNON, xii. 363, 364, and 427, note.

swept away by the impulse given so violently to the south of Germany. The Austrian army, which was on the Inn, is doubtless already in march for the Rhine. The Bavarian army will follow it. They will draw after them the whole armed force which they find on the road, and then our frontier is at once menaced and invaded. What can be so urgent, then, as to draw near to it? It is always, without doubt, an evil to change a plan; and the peril here is the greater, that we must operate towards the Rhine, when we were prepared to have marched over the Elbe. But is it not better to resign ourselves to this, than to lose everything? Circumstances have changed: we must change with them." The Emperor was not convinced by these reasons, how weighty soever they might appear; but he yielded to the torrent, and gave orders to recall Reynier and Bertrand, who were making ready to march on Berlin; and all was prepared for a retreat to Leipsic.[1]

[1] Fain, ii. 377, 378. Jom. iv. 439, 440. Die Grosse Chron. i. 718, 719. Bign. xii. 387.

20. Fearful danger with which the French were environed.

When this resolution was taken, however, matters had proceeded to such extremities, that it was not only impossible to regain the Rhine without a battle, but the losses likely to be incurred, in case of disaster, were frightful. St-Cyr was to be left at Dresden with thirty-five thousand men, and Davoust with twenty-five thousand at Hamburg; Magdeburg, Wittenberg, and Torgau, had each its garrison, which would be speedily surrounded; and if the French army were obliged to continue its retreat to the Rhine, it was easy to foresee that the whole fortresses on the Elbe, with ninety thousand men in arms within their walls, would become the prey of the victor. Magdeburg contained the great magazine of provisions for the army: the grand park of artillery, and reserves of ammunition, which had been stopped at Eilenburg, were hurried into Torgau; while the King of Saxony prepared to follow the fortunes of the Grand Army to Leipsic. In this way, Napoleon set out to fight his way back to the Rhine, through two hundred and fifty thousand enemies,

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separated both from his magazines and his reserve artillery and ammunition. It must be admitted that a more perilous position could hardly be conceived, and that the system of pushing forward, and making war maintain war, had now been strained to the very uttermost. The Emperor felt his danger; but still trusted to his star. "A thunderbolt," said he afterwards, "alone could have saved us; but nothing was desperate so long as I had the chances of a battle; and in our position a single victory might have restored to us the north as far as Dantzic." [1]

[1] Las Cases, vi. 38. Fain, ii. 378, 381. Die Grosse Chron. i. 719.

21. Universal joy with which the French army received the orders to move towards Leipsic.

With joyful steps the army obeyed the order to face about and march towards the Rhine. Joy beamed in every countenance; the sounds of mirth were heard in every rank: at length their sufferings were come to an end, and they were to revisit their beloved France. The Emperor set out early on the morning of the 15th, and arrived at noon at LEIPSIC, where Marmont and Augereau had some days before united their forces. In approaching the city, which he already foresaw was to be the theatre of a decisive battle, he cast an eager glance over the heights of Pfaffendorf, and the windings of the Partha, which protect on the north the approach to the town. He then rode out to survey the ramparts which encircle the old town and separate it from the suburbs; and, while doing so, the sound of cannon was heard in the direction of Pegau. It was the King of Naples, who, on the position of Magdebora, arrested the approach of the advanced guard of Schwartzenberg's army. Five corps, and a numerous body of cavalry, in all eighty thousand men, were there assembled under his orders. He had previously intended to conduct the bulk of his army through Leipsic, and join the Emperor to the north of that city, conceiving that it was in that direction that the battle was to be fought; and, under this idea, he had abandoned to the enemy the important defiles at Grobern and Gochrew.[2] But being informed the same day of the resolution of

[2] Jom. iv. 446, 447. Fain, ii. 383, 384. Bout. 108, 109.

Napoleon to hold the town to the last extremity, he retraced his steps the day following, and took post on the heights of Magdebora, where the severe cavalry action took place between the French dragoons and the Russian and Prussian cuirassiers, which has already been noticed.

22. Description of the town and environs of Leipsic.

Atlas, Plate 88.

The old city of Leipsic, which is of no great extent, is surrounded by an irregular rampart, which forms nearly a square. It consists of a dilapidated curtain of masonry, covered by a ditch almost obliterated, without a counterscarp, beyond which broad boulevards, planted with trees, form a spacious and shady walk for the citizens. The suburbs, which stretch, as in most Continental cities, beyond this verdant belt, were much more considerable at that period; and they were then, as now, also shut in towards the south and east, by walls, and the gates strengthened by palisades; but towards the north-west, on the side of the Partha, they were altogether open. To the west and south-west, on the road to France, the city is bounded by the marshes of the Elster and the Pleisse, which streams, flowing in a lazy current to the north-west, enclose between them swampy meadows nearly two miles broad, wholly impassable for carriages. Though those rivers are of no great breadth, they are so deep and muddy, that they are in most places unfordable either by cavalry or infantry. This broad marsh is crossed only by the road to Lützen and Mayence, which, after traversing the long and narrow street which leads to the barrier of Markrannstadt, enters the city by the Halle gate, over a bridge at the same place. There were no other arches over the Elster but one or two wooden ones for foot passengers, and the stone bridge over which the great road passes, well known from the frightful catastrophe a few days after, which has rendered it immortal in history. To the east the country consists of a beautiful plain, in the highest state of cultivation, offering a theatre worthy of the battle which was to decide the fate of Europe.[1]

[1] Personal observations. Bout. 161. Cap. ix. Introd. 15. Fain, ii. 383. Die Grosse Chron. i. 757, 758, 762.

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To the south-east, like a chain of verdure, extend the hills of Wachau, then occupied in force by Murat's army; while to the north-west, in the direction of Möckern, the windings of the Partha, and the gentle swells and villages adjoining its banks, present a variety of obstacles to retard the advance of an enemy.

23. Napoleon inspects the field of battle.

No sooner was the arrival of the Emperor known to Murat, than he hastened to wait upon him; and the two sovereigns rode out together toward the heights behind Liebertwolkwitz, from whence the whole plain to the south-east of Leipsic can be descried. From an elevated point in that direction, near the bed of the Pleisse, Napoleon surveyed the whole field, and gave the necessary orders for the day following. Seated by a blazing watch-fire, after his usual custom, in the midst of the squares of his Guard, he long and anxiously surveyed the ground, and in particular the mossy and swampy beds of the Pleisse and the Elster, which extended, in a broad belt, nearly two miles across, in the rear of the whole position occupied by the French army. From thence he rode on to the hills of Liebertwolkwitz, from which elevated ridge not only the positions of his own troops, but the advanced posts of the enemy, were visible. The heads of the Russian and Austrian columns appeared in great strength within cannon-range. But as yet all was still: not a sound was heard, and no appearance of hostilities was visible. Here an imposing ceremony took place, in the distribution of eagles by Napoleon to three regiments which had not hitherto received them; and he returned to Leipsic by the course of the Pleisse, after inspecting Poniatowski's Poles, who occupied the marshy banks of that stream.[1]

[1] Odel. i. 15, 17. Fain, ii. 381, 383. Plotho, ii. 356. Die Grosse Chron. i. 746, 749.

The positions occupied by the French army on the night of the 15th, were as follows:—Bertrand's corps held Lindenau, at the entrance of the chaussée which crossed the marshes of the Elster, in order to cover that important defile, and keep at a distance a strong column of the

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enemy, which, having gained the great road to Erfurth, menaced the rear, and had already entirely cut off the communications of the French army. To the eastward of the marshes, under the immediate command of the Emperor, three corps were stationed, facing to the southward; viz. Poniatowski's Poles on the right, on the edge of the Elster and Pleisse, between Mark-Kleeberg and Connewitz; next Augereau, on the southern slope of the heights of Wachau, flanked on either side by Milhaud's and Kellermann's cavalry; behind Wachau were placed Victor's men; from thence to Liebertwolkwitz stretched Lauriston's corps; on their left, Macdonald, who was every instant expected, was to debouche from Holzhausen; Latour Maubourg and Sebastiani's horse stood on the left flank of Lauriston's corps; while the Imperial Guard, around Napoleon, were in reserve near Probstheyda. In all, six corps of infantry and four of horse, mustering a hundred and ten thousand men, of whom eighteen thousand were cavalry; and of these a hundred thousand were to the eastward of the Pleisse, and on the proper field of battle.[1]

24. Positions of the French army round Leipsic. Oct. 15.

[1] Vict. et Conq. xxii. 127. Bout. 112. Vaud. i. 204. Kausler, 932. Plotho, ii. 340.

To the north-west of Leipsic, but so far removed from it as to be a separate army, a considerable force was collected to combat Blucher and the Prince-Royal of Sweden, who, in that direction, were drawing near to the city with a formidable array of troops. They consisted of Marmont's corps and two divisions of Ney's, which were posted between MÖCKERN and Euteritzsch; the other division of Ney's corps, with the artillery, were on march from Düben, but had not yet taken up their ground. Arrighi's cavalry, however, three thousand strong, had come up, and Reynier's Saxons were hourly expected. The forces on the ground consisted of forty-five thousand infantry and three thousand cavalry.[2] The whole army, already arrived, or on the road from Düben, and certain to take part in the battle, amounted to a hundred and forty thousand infantry and thirty-five thousand cavalry, with seven hundred and

25. Forces and position of the French on the north of Leipsic.

[2] Vaud. i. 201, 204. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 127, 128. Bout. 108, 109. Lab. ii. 379. Kausler, 932. Bat. de Leipsic, Posen, 1835, 32. Die Grosse Chron. i. 755.

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twenty pieces of cannon, distributed in three hundred and eighty-four battalions, and three hundred and seventy-two squadrons. An immense force! equal to that with which Napoleon had conquered at Wagram,[1] and superior to that which had fought at Borodino;[2] but, great as it was, it was overmatched by the ranks of the Allies, who had now arrayed under their banners the greatest military force that modern Europe had ever seen assembled in a single field.

1 *Ante*, ch. lix. § 24.
2 *Ibid.* ch. lxxii. § 80.

26. Position of the grand Allied army to the south of Leipsic.

The forces of the Allies were divided, like the French, into two armies; the principal of which, under Schwartzenberg, was opposed to the Grand Army of Napoleon, while that of the north, under Bernadotte and Blucher, advanced against Ney and Marmont. They were thus arranged in the Grand Army for the attack of the French from the south. On their own left, opposite to the French right, and on the edge of the morass on the left bank of the Elster, stood Giulay's corps of Austrians, with Lichtenstein and Thielman's light troops; the centre, opposite to Wachau, and stretching from thence across the Pleisse, towards the Elster, was very strong, consisting of Meerfeldt and the Prince of Hesse Homburg's Austrians, Wittgenstein's Russians, and Kleist's Prussians; while the right wing, opposed to Macdonald and Lauriston, was composed of Klenau's corps of Austrians; Ziethen's brigade of Prussians, who were at Gross Pössnau, having their extreme flank covered by the Cossacks under Platoff. The reserve, consisting of the Russian and Prussian Guards, and two divisions of cuirassiers, under the Grand-duke Constantine and Milaradowich, were at Magdebora.[3]

3 Kausler, 921. Vaud. i. 202. Bout. 110. Die Grosse Chron. i. 755, 756. Fain, ii. 390, 407.

27. Great error of this arrangement.

The great defect of this arrangement, which no representations on the part of the Russian generals could induce Prince Schwartzenberg to alter, was, that the rivers Elster and Pleisse flowed through the middle of the Allied line, separating thus the left wing from the centre, and one part of the centre from the other—a most perilous situa-

tion, if any disaster had rendered it necessary for one part of the Allied line to assist the other, and which exposed the portion of it placed between the two rivers to imminent danger. The Austrian general even carried his infatuation so far, as to desire to post the flower of the Allied army, the Russian and Prussian Guards, in the narrow space between the Pleisse and the Elster; and it was only by the determined resistance of the Emperor Alexander, that they were brought to the decisive point in the centre, to the east of both these rivers. Although Benningsen's corps and Colloredo's reserves had not yet come up, the force here assembled was immense: it consisted of no less than a hundred and forty-three thousand combatants, of which twenty-five thousand were cavalry, with six hundred and twenty guns. Benningsen and Colloredo's reserve, although not in time for the battle on the 16th, might be expected on the day following; and they were thirty-eight thousand more, of whom three thousand were horse, with a hundred and thirty pieces of cannon.[1]

[1] Kausler, 931. Vaud. i. 202. Bout. 110, 111. Jom. iv. 448, 449.

28. Forces and position of the Allies to the north of Leipsic.

To the north of Leipsic, the disproportion was still greater. The armies of Silesia and Bernadotte, which lay in that direction, formed in all a mass of a hundred and three thousand combatants, of whom sixteen thousand were cavalry, with three hundred and ninety pieces of cannon. They had not, however, all come up. Bernadotte, as already mentioned, had made an eccentric movement towards the Elbe, and the troops in line consisted only of the corps of Langeron and York, with Sacken in reserve, which had their headquarters at Schkeuditz, on the road to Halle; and they amounted to fifty-six thousand effective men, with three hundred and fifty-six guns. Thus the contending parties towards Möckern were very nearly matched on the first day; the French having forty-eight thousand, and the Allies fifty-six thousand men. But if the contest should be prolonged for another day, and the Prince-Royal come up in time to take part

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in it, forty-seven thousand additional combatants would be thrown into the balance, to which the French reserves, brought from Düben, would not oppose more than thirty thousand. Thus, upon the whole, for the final shock on which the contest would ultimately depend, the Allies could count upon two hundred and ninety thousand men, and above thirteen hundred guns; while the French could only reckon on a hundred and seventy-five thousand men, and seven hundred and twenty pieces of cannon. A fearful disproportion, which all the advantages of Napoleon's central position and great abilities could hardly compensate; and which demonstrated that the formidable military confederacy, of which he had so long formed the head, was now fairly overmatched by the vast host which its intolerable exactions had arrayed to assert the independence of mankind.[1]*

[1] Bout. 121. Kausler, 931, 932. Vaud. ii. 202, 203. Fain, ii. 405. Die Grosse Chron. i. 754.

29. Feelings of the soldiers on both sides.

At midnight on the night of the 15th, two rockets were sent up to a prodigious height from the headquarters of Prince Schwartzenberg, to the south of Leipsic, and were immediately answered by three, two of a blue and one of a red light, from Blucher's, on the north. These awful signals told the assembled myriads, that all things were in readiness in both armies, and that the hour of the final struggle had struck. All was tranquil in the French lines: their watchfires burned with a steady light, and no moving figures around the flame indicated an intention to retreat. Unspeakable was the ardour which the solemnity of the moment excited in the Allied ranks. Now was the appointed time — now was the day of salvation. Retreat to the enemy without a conflict was impossible: the host of Germany encircled his ranks: on the morrow, the mighty conflict which was to avenge the wrongs of twenty years, and determine whether they and their children were to be freemen or slaves, was to be decided. Confidence pervaded every bosom; hope beat high in every

* See Appendix, B., Chap. LXXXI., where a detailed account of the whole forces engaged on either side at Leipsic is given.

heart. Recent success, present strength, seemed the certain harbingers of victory. A sombre feeling of disquietude, on the other hand, pervaded the French army: their ancient courage was the same, their hereditary spirit was unshaken; but disaster had chilled their ardour, diminished numbers depressed their hopes, and their confidence in the star of the Emperor had been irrevocably shaken. Still they looked forward undaunted to the fight, and resolved to show themselves, under whatever fortune, worthy of the eagles which they bore.[1]

[1] Capef. x. 218.

30. Schwartzenberg's proclamation to his troops.

At daybreak, the following noble proclamation was issued by Prince Schwartzenberg, and read at the head of every company and squadron in his army:—"The most important epoch of this sacred war has arrived, brave warriors! Prepare for the combat. The bond which unites so many powerful nations in the most just, as well as the greatest of causes, is about to be yet closer drawn, and rendered indissoluble on the field of battle. Russians, Prussians, Austrians! you all combat for the same cause: you fight for the liberty of Europe—for the independence of your children — for the immortal renown of your names. All for each! each for all! With this device, the sacred combat is about to commence. Be faithful at the decisive moment, and victory is our own."* No proclamation was issued to the French army: no heart-stirring words breathed the fire of Napoleon's spirit, or announced the well-known prophecy of victory—an ominous circumstance, indicating in no equivocal manner that the Emperor's confidence in his fortune was at an end.[2]

[2] Capef. x. 218, 219.

Early in the morning of the 16th, Napoleon repaired to the army of Murat, and, from a height near Liebert-

* "Ecco l'ultimo giorno; eccovi quello
Che già tanto bramaste, omai presente.
Nè senza alta cagion, che'l suo rubello
Popolo in un s' accoglia, il Ciel consente:
Ogni vostro nemico ha qui congiunto,
Per fornir molte guerre in un sol punto."
Tasso, *Ger. Lib.* xx. 14.

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31. Commencement of the battle, and early success of the Allies.

wolkwitz, long and anxiously surveyed the field of the approaching battle. Precisely at nine, three guns were discharged from the centre of Schwartzenberg's army, and immediately the fire began along the whole line. The Allied columns, dark and massy, advanced to the attack in the most imposing array; two hundred pieces of artillery preceded their march, and soon the cannonade on the two sides exceeded anything ever heard in the annals of war. The earth, literally speaking, trembled under the discharge, on the two sides, of above a thousand guns: the balls flew over every part of the field of battle, and killed several persons in Napoleon's suite, as well as in the Guards and cuirassiers, who were stationed a little in the rear; while through the midst of the iron tempest the Allied columns advanced to the attack. Slowly but steadily the vast host moved forward. The eye sought in vain to measure its dimensions: innumerable battalions and squadrons covered the field in every part. From the steeples of Leipsic it seemed as if a dark forest of immeasurable extent was slowly approaching the city. The scene realised, in a far greater scale, all that the genius of Homer had prefigured of the Grecian host which advanced against Troy:

"Ὡς τῶν ἔθνεα πολλὰ νεῶν ἄπο καὶ κλισιάων
Ἐς πεδίον προχέοντο Σκαμάνδριον· αὐτὰρ ὑπὸ χθὼν
Σμερδαλέον κονάβιζε ποδῶν αὐτῶν τε καὶ ἵππων·
Ἕσταν δ' ἐν λειμῶνι Σκαμανδρίῳ ἀνθεμόεντι
Μυρίοι, ὅσσα τε φύλλα καὶ ἄνθεα γίγνεται ὥρῃ."*

Kleist, with the left, following the course of the Elster, moved against Mark-Kleeberg, of which he soon made himself master. To check his progress beyond that

* ——— "With noise the field resounds;
Thus numerous and confused, extending wide,
The legions crowd Scamander's flowing side:
With rushing troops the plains are covered o'er,
And thundering footsteps shake the sounding shore;
Along the rivers' level meads they stand,
Thick as in spring the flowers adorn the land,
Or leaves the trees."—POPE's *Homer*, ii. 546.

village, a considerable body of Milhaud's horse were brought forward by Poniatowski; but Lewachoff, at the head of two regiments of Russian cuirassiers, boldly charged across the ravine which descends from the heights of Wachau to that village, and, scaling the rugged banks on the opposite side, dispersed the enemy's horse, and, pushing right on, carried confusion into the French right, and even compelled Napoleon himself, with his suite, to give ground. The Imperial Guard and two regiments of cuirassiers were brought up; but though they checked Lewachoff's advance, yet he retired in good order, and brought back his men without sustaining any serious loss. In the centre, however, the attack was not equally successful. Prince Eugene of Würtemberg was at first repulsed at Wachau by the heroic defence of Victor's men, while his guns were silenced by the superior fire of the French artillery. And although, by a great effort, he at length carried the village, he was speedily driven out again with great loss by the French reserves; while, on the right, Klenau and Gortschakoff, not having succeeded in reaching Liebertwolkwitz at the same time, ultimately failed in dislodging Lauriston permanently from that important village, though it was at first carried by the Austrians under the first of these generals. Six times did the brave Russians and Austrians return to the attack of these villages, and six times were they repulsed by the invincible resolution of Lauriston's men, supported by Macdonald's corps and Sebastiani's dragoons.[1]

[1] Kausler, 937, 938. Bout. 113, 114. Jom. iv. 454. Odel. ii. 19, 20. Vaud. i. 206. Plotho, ii. 365, 366.

32. Napoleon prepares a grand attack on the enemy's centre.

At eleven o'clock Macdonald brought up his whole corps in an oblique direction from Holzhausen, and, taking Klenau's attacking corps in flank, he gained considerable success. The Austrians were driven back, and a battery which they had established on the heights of the Kolmberg was taken by Charpentier's division. Encouraged by this advantage on his left, and deeming the enemy in front of Liebertwolkwitz sufficiently exhausted

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by three hours' continued and severe fighting, Napoleon, who arrived at noon on the heights behind Wachau, followed by the Guards and cuirassiers, resolved to put in force his favourite measure of a grand attack on the enemy's centre. With this view, two divisions of the Young Guard, under Oudinot, were brought up and stationed close behind Wachau; two others, under Mortier, were sent to Liebertwolkwitz; Augereau was despatched from his ground on the right-centre, to support Poniatowski, who had nearly succeeded in regaining Mark-Kleeberg; and behind him the Old Guard moved forward to Dolitz, so as to be in readiness to support either the right or the centre, as circumstances might require. Finally, Drouot, with sixty guns of the Guard, so well known in all Napoleon's former battles, was brought to the front of the centre; and these pieces, moving steadily forward, soon made the earth shake by their rapid and continued fire. The Allied centre was unable to resist this desperate attack: Victor and Oudinot, preceded by the terrible battery, steadily gained ground; the advance of Macdonald's column at Wagram seemed to be again renewed under circumstances precisely similar; and Napoleon, deeming the battle gained, sent word to the King of Saxony in Leipsic that he was entirely successful, and had made two thousand prisoners. He enjoined him to cause all the bells to be rung, in the city and adjoining villages, to announce his victory.[1]

[1] Bout. 114, 115. Odel. ii. 21, 22. Kausler, 939. Vaud. i. 205, 206. Lab. i. 382, 383. Die Grosse Chron. i. 771, 775.

33. Schwartzenberg's measures to support his centre.

Schwartzenberg, finding his centre thus violently assailed, made the most vigorous efforts to support it. Prince Eugene of Würtemberg, unable to resist the shock of Victor, supported by the Old Guard and Drouot's artillery, gave ground and was rapidly falling into confusion, when Raeffskoi was brought up to support him with his invincible grenadiers. The brave Russians took post, one division behind the sheepfold of Auenhayn, and the other at Gossa; and, without once flinching before the terrible battery, kept up so incessant a fire of mus-

ketry as at length arrested the progress of the enemy. Klenau, however, attacked in front by Lauriston, and threatened in flank by Macdonald, was unable to maintain himself on the slopes of Liebertwolkwitz, and was forced back, after a desperate resistance by his cavalry, to Gross Pössnau and Seyffertshayn, where he at length succeeded in maintaining himself, though with great difficulty, till nightfall. Schwartzenberg, seeing his centre so nearly forced by the impetuous attack of the French Guard, ordered up the Austrian reserve, under Prince Hesse Homburg, from Zöbigker, where it had been stationed, in spite of the strenuous remonstrances of Alexander and Jomini, on the other side of the Pleisse, and consequently in a situation where it could not be brought to bear on the decisive point without a long delay. They were hurried as fast as possible across the river; but meanwhile Napoleon, desirous of beating down the resistance of Raeffskoi's grenadiers, moved forward his reserve cavalry under Latour Maubourg and Kellermann. At the same time an attack by infantry was ordered, under Charpentier, on an old intrenchment on a hill called the Swedish redoubt, where the bones of the warriors of the great Gustavus reposed, which had been won from the French in the early part of the day. So vehement, however, was the fire from the batteries on the summit, that the assaulting regiments paused at the foot of the hill. Napoleon hastened to the spot:—"What regiment is that?" said he to Charpentier.—"The 22d light infantry," replied the general. "That is impossible," replied Napoleon; "the 22d would never let themselves be cut down by grape-shot without taking their muskets from their shoulders." These words being repeated to the regiment, they were so stung by the reproach, that, breaking into a charge, they ran up the hill and carried the post, which seemed to give the Emperor a decisive advantage in that part of the field of battle.[1]

[1] Odel. ii. 331. Bout. 115, 116. Jom. iv. 455, 456. Fain, ii. 397, 399. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 131, 132. Plotho, ii. 378, 379.

Such was the impression soon after produced by the

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34. Desperate combat of cavalry in the centre.

reserve cavalry, that terrible arm which always formed so important an element in Napoleon's tactics, that it had wellnigh decided the battle in his favour. At one o'clock in the afternoon, Kellermann, at the head of six thousand horse, debouched from Wachau, to the left of that village, supported by several squares of infantry, and advanced rapidly against the retiring columns of Prince Eugene of Würtemberg. Lewachoff, proud of his gallant achievement in the morning, threw himself, with his three regiments of Russian cuirassiers, in the way of the charge; but he was speedily overwhelmed, and driven back with great loss towards Gossa. The consequences might have been fatal, had not Alexander, by the advice of Jomini, shortly before brought up his Guards and reserves to the menaced point in the centre, where they were stationed behind the Göselbach; while Schwartzenberg, now sensible, when it was all but too late, of his inexplicable error in stationing the Austrian reserves in a position between the Elster and the Pleisse, where they could be of no service, hurried forward the Austrian cuirassiers of the Guard to the point of danger. This superb corps, consisting of six regiments cased in steel, the very flower of the Imperial army, under Count Nostitz, after crossing the Pleisse at Grübern, arrived at the menaced point at the critical moment, and instantly bore down with loud cheers and irresistible force on the flank of Kellermann's dragoons, when somewhat disordered by the rout of Lewachoff's men. The effect was instantaneous; the French horse were routed and driven back in great disorder to the heights behind Wachau, where, however, they re-formed under cover of the powerful batteries which there protected the French centre.[1]

[1] Vict. et Conq. xxii. 131, 132. Jom. iv. 456, 458. Bout. 116, 117. Kausler, 940. Die Grosse Chron. i. 781, 782. Plotho, ii. 384, 392.

While extreme danger was thus narrowly avoided in the centre to the west of Wachau, peril still more imminent threatened the Allies to the east of that village. Latour Maubourg and Murat, at the head of four thousand

cuirassiers of the Guard, there bore down on the flank of the Allied right, while Victor and Lauriston assailed its front. This double charge was at first attended with great success. Though the brave Latour Maubourg had his leg carried off by a cannon-shot in the advance,* the ponderous mass advanced in admirable order under Bordesoult, broke Prince Eugene of Würtemberg's infantry by a charge in flank, routed ten light squadrons of the Russian Guard, which strove to arrest its progress, and captured six-and-twenty guns. So violent was the onset, so complete the opening made in the centre of the Allies by this terrible charge, that the French horsemen pushed on to the position where the Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia had taken their station, and they were obliged to mount on horseback and retire a little distance to the rear, to avoid being made prisoners.[1]

35. Latour Maubourg's vehement charge to the east of Wachau.

[1] Vaud. i. 207. Bout. 116, 117. Fain, ii. 399.

But in this decisive moment Alexander was not wanting to himself or the cause with which he was intrusted. Imitating the coolness of Napoleon on occasion of a similar crisis at the cemetery of Eylau,[2] he boldly advanced to the front, and ordered the red Cossacks of the Guard under Orloff Denisoff to charge the enemy's flank, while the heavy cavalry of Barclay were also called up, and the last reserve batteries directed to open their fire. These dispositions, promptly taken and rapidly executed, changed the fate of the day. With resistless force, Orloff Denisoff's men, all chosen cavaliers from the banks of the Don, bore down on the flank of the French cuirassiers immediately after they had captured the guns, and when their horses were blown by previous efforts. Their long lances were more than a match for the cuirassiers' sabres: instantly the whole hostile squadrons were pierced through and routed, four-

36. Which is defeated by Alexander in person.

[2] *Ante*, ch. xliv. § 66.

* Amputation was immediately performed on this distinguished officer, which he bore with his usual courage and *sang-froid*. His servant, a faithful domestic, having given way to an agony of grief at the sight, he said, "Why do you distress yourself? you will only have one boot to clean."—ODELEBEN, ii. 32.

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and-twenty of the guns retaken, and the French cavalry driven back with immense loss to their own lines. Resuming the offensive, Raeffskoi's grenadiers now attacked the sheep-fold of Auenhayn, the object already of such desperate strife, and carried it at the point of the bayonet — an acquisition which, from its elevated position, again gave the Allies the advantage in that part of the field.[1]

[1] Bout. 116, 118. Vaud. i. 207. Jom. iv. 457, 458. Fain, ii. 399. Die Grosse Chron. i. 780, 791.

37. Arrival of the Austrian reserve on the field.

The crisis of the battle was now passed; the direction of Napoleon's attacks was clearly indicated; Schwartzenberg had gained time to rectify his faulty dispositions, and he had brought up his powerful reserves from the other side of the Pleisse to the scene of danger. At three o'clock in the afternoon, the Austrian reserves came up to the front at all points: Bianchi relieved, at Mark-Kleeberg, Kleist's troops, who had with great difficulty maintained themselves there against the attack of Augereau and Poniatowski; and, turning the powerful batteries which they brought up against the flank of Augereau's corps, they compelled it to fall back to its original position. Bianchi followed up his advantage: he issued from Mark-Kleeberg and charged the right flank of Napoleon's centre with loud cries, and with such vigour that all around the Emperor deemed the battle lost. He himself was forced to retire some hundred paces. Instantly, however, like Alexander an hour before, he ordered up the battalions of the Old Guard, who stopped the head of the column; but its numerous artillery played in the most destructive manner on the flank of Victor's corps, and compelled it to fall back to the French lines. At the same time, the cannon sounded violently on the north, and repeated couriers from Marmont and Ney announced that, so far from being able to render the Emperor any farther assistance, they could with difficulty maintain themselves against the impetuous attacks of Blucher.[2]

[2] Bout. 118. Vaud. i. 208. Jom. iv. 458. Fain, ii. 401. Odel. ii. Plotho, ii. 393. Die Grosse Chron. i. 791, 794.

Sensible that, if success now escaped him, he would

in vain seek to recall it on the following day, when the Prince-Royal, Benningsen, and Colloredo had brought up nearly a hundred thousand fresh troops to the enemy's standards, Napoleon resolved to make one effort more for victory. With this view, between five and six o'clock, he re-formed his reserve cavalry behind Liebertwolkwitz: Victor's and Lauriston's corps were thrown into a deep column of attack, and, preceded by a numerous array of artillery, advanced against Gossa. Such was the weight of the mass, and the rapidity with which the guns were discharged, that Gortschakoff's corps was broken, and Gossa taken; but in this extremity Schwartzenberg brought up the Prussian division of Pirsch, which regained the village, and drove back the column to a considerable distance; while a powerful Russian battery of eighty pieces of the Guard, by the precision and rapidity of their fire, arrested the progress of the enemy in that quarter. Excessive fatigue prevented either party from making any further efforts in the centre and left, and the battle there was reduced to a furious cannonade, which continued without intermission till night overspread the scene.[1]

38. Napoleon's last efforts.

[1] Vict. et Conq. xxii. 133, 134. Bout. 118, 119. Jom. iv. 438, 439. Kausler, 941. Fain, ii. 401. Plotho, ii. 379.

Meerfeldt soon after came up, having been long retarded in his march across the swamps between the Pleisse and the Elster, by the almost impracticable nature of the ground. Late in the evening, however, he succeeded in crossing the latter stream by the ford of Dolitz, and was advancing at the head of the leading battalion to attack the French right flank near Mark-Kleeberg, when he was suddenly assailed by a division of the Old Guard in front, and by Poniatowski's Poles in flank, and driven back with great loss into the river. Meerfeldt himself was made prisoner, with a whole battalion, and immediately brought into the Emperor's presence. Although the repulse of his corps was of no material consequence to the issue of the day, it threw a ray of glory over this well-contested field of carnage.[2]

39. Last attack of Meerfeldt, which is repulsed, and he is made prisoner.

[2] Bout. 119, 120. Jom. iv. 460. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 134. Fain, ii. 403. Die Grosse Chron. i. 793, 800.

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40. Operations of Giulay at Lindenau.

On the other side of the Elster, Giulay was engaged the whole day, with various success, against Bertrand's corps. Though far removed from the headquarters of either army, and separated by five miles of marshes and broken ground from the great body of the combatants, the struggle there was one of life and death to the French army; for Bertrand fought for Lindenau, and their only line of retreat to the Rhine in case of disaster. The Austrians were at first successful, though not without a desperate struggle. After seven hours' hard fighting, their gallant corps overcame the stubborn resistance of the French, and Bertrand was not only driven out of Lindenau into the marshes, but forced to take refuge behind the Luppe, where his troops, drawn up in several squares, maintained the contest only by a loose fire of tirailleurs. If Giulay had, as soon as he got possession of the town, broken the bridges of Lindenau, the communications of the French army would have been entirely cut off, and their retreat to the Rhine rendered impossible. Seriously alarmed at the prospect of such a disaster, Napoleon sent positive orders to Bertrand to regain that important post at all hazards, coupled with severe remarks upon his having ever lost it. Stung to the quick by these reproaches, that brave general immediately re-formed his troops into columns of attack, and, falling suddenly on the Austrians, who, deeming the contest over, were off their guard, drove them out of Lindenau, and re-opened the communications of the Grand Army. Giulay, upon this, drew off his troops to the ground they had occupied at the commencement of the action.[1]

[1] Vict. et Conq. xxii. 134. Bout. 120. Fain, ii.407. Lab. ii. 387, 388. Die Grosse Chron. i. 802, 804.

41. Battle of Möckern between Blucher and Ney.

To the north-west of Leipsic, on the side of Möckern, a conflict took place, less important as regarded the number of forces engaged, but not inferior in the valour and obstinacy displayed on both sides, between the armies of Blucher and Ney. The Prussian general, in conformity with the concerted plan of operations, had put himself in motion at daybreak from his position in front of Halle,

and advanced in two columns: Langeron by Radefeld and Breitenfeld; and York by Lützschena and Lindenthal on Möckern; while Sacken formed the reserve. Before they reached the enemy, however, who was posted near Schkeuditz, the action had begun on the south of Leipsic; and Ney, who had the command, was so impressed with the awful cannonade which was heard in that direction, that he despatched two divisions of his own corps, now under the command of Souham, towards Wachau, to reinforce the Emperor. The effects of this generous zeal were in the highest degree disastrous to the French arms. The other divisions of Souham's corps having not yet come up from Düben, the French marshal had not at his disposal, after this large deduction, above twenty-five thousand foot and three thousand horse, while Blucher had fifty-six thousand. Ney drew up his troops in a strong position, the right in front of a wood of some extent in the neighbourhood of Breitenfeld, and occupying the villages of Gross and Klein Widderitzch; the line extending from thence through Lindenthal to Möckern on the left. Advanced posts also occupied Radefeld and other villages in front. Langeron was directed to expel the enemy from Radefeld; and, pushing on, to force Breitenfeld, and drive him into the open plain beyond, towards Leipsic: while York, on the French left, following the great road to Leipsic, was to turn to its left at Lützschena, and drive the enemy from Lindenthal.[1]

[1] Plotho, ii. 386, 389. Die Grosse Chron. i. 821, 830. Lond. 155, 156. Bout. 121, 122. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 134, 135.

42. Defeat of Ney by Blucher.

At the first onset, Ney, finding himself assailed by such superior forces, abandoned Radefeld and the villages in front, and drew in his advanced posts over a considerable space to the main line running from Lindenthal to Möckern. There, however, notwithstanding his great inferiority of force, he stood firm, and a most obstinate conflict ensued. The wood on their right, and the villages of Gross and Klein Widderitzch, furiously assailed by Langeron, were as bravely defended by the French

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marshal; but, after being three times taken and retaken, they finally remained in the possession of the Allies. York at the same time commenced a vigorous attack on Möckern, on the extreme French left; while the Russian horse charged with the utmost gallantry the French batteries and squares in the open plain between the villages. After a most sanguinary conflict, in the course of which it was five times taken and retaken, Möckern was carried by York; and Marmont's corps, driven back to the open plain in the direction of the Partha, soon fell into disorder, and lost a considerable part of its artillery, under the repeated charges of the Russian and Prussian cavalry. The whole French line was falling into confusion before Sacken came up with the Russian reserve; so that he was not required to take part in the action. Late in the evening, Delmas' division of Souham's corps arrived from Düben, and was immediately hurried forward to the right, to cover the retreat of the park of Souham's corps, which was in the most imminent danger of falling into the hands of the victorious Russians. But, though this calamity was averted by the good countenance which that body showed, yet it was too late to retrieve the day; and the shattered remains of Ney's army retired behind the Partha, having lost an eagle, two standards, twenty guns, and two thousand prisoners, besides four thousand killed and wounded, in this well-fought field. In addition, thirty cannon were surprised by the Cossacks on the night following; and this concluded an action in which the French, though defeated by superior numbers, displayed the most heroic courage and devotion.[1]

[1] Lond. 155, 159. Bout. 121, 122. Jom. iv. 461, 462. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 135. Fain, ii. 406. Richter, ii. 237. Plotho, ii. 387, 390.

43. Result of this day's fighting.

The battle of the 16th, though it terminated decisively in favour of the Allies only on the side of the Partha, yet was, in its general results, entirely to their advantage. Situated as Napoleon was, an indecisive action was equivalent to a defeat: his affairs were in such a situation, that nothing could retrieve them but a decisive victory.

Under Napoleon in person the French might boast with reason of having had the advantage, since the Allies who made the attack had been unable, excepting at Mark-Kleeberg, to force them from their position ; and the loss, which was upwards of fifteen thousand on each side, was pretty nearly balanced. But the defeat at Möckern threatened his rear ; the frightful peril incurred at Lindenau, had shown the hazard in which his communications were placed. The enemy on the succeeding day would receive reinforcements to the amount of nearly a hundred thousand men, while he could not draw to his standards above thirty-five thousand ; and his position, separated from his reserve park of ammunition, which was at Torgau, and his only magazines, which were at Magdeburg, with a single chaussée traversing two miles of morasses for his line of retreat, was in the last degree perilous. Sound policy, therefore, counselled immediate preparations for a retreat, when his forces were still in a great measure unbroken, and he could, by holding Leipsic as a *tête-de-pont*, gain time for his immense army to defile over the perilous pass in its rear. As soon as the junction of Reynier's corps and the grand park of artillery was secured, he might have retired with comparatively little loss, and probably without any molestation, on the 17th. But Napoleon could not brook the idea of retiring from an open field, in which he himself had commanded. His position, as the head of a revolutionised military state, forbade it. Continued success, the dazzling the world by ceaseless triumphs, was to him the condition of existence. He had announced to the King of Saxony that he had been victorious : all the bells in and around Leipsic had been rung to celebrate his triumph : if he now retreated, it would be to announce to all Europe that he had been defeated.[1] Actuated by these feelings, as well as by a lingering confidence in his good fortune, and in the likelihood of the Allied generals falling into some error which might give him the means of

[1] Bout. 123, 124. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 136. Rogniat, Art de la Guerre, 394. Jom. iv. 462. Plotho, ii. 385. Die Grosse Chron. i. 836, 837. Bign. xii. 401.

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striking a decisive blow from his central position, he resolved to remain firm. But in doing so, he committed a fatal error. He not only made no preparations for a retreat, but gave no directions for throwing any additional bridges over the Elster and Pleisse in his rear, though the engineers could have established twenty in a single night.

44. Napoleon's conference with Meerfeldt, whom he sends back with secret proposals.

No sooner had the firing ceased than Napoleon ordered Meerfeldt to be brought into his presence. He hailed with the utmost eagerness the opportunity of re-opening, by means of the Austrian general, with whom he was well acquainted, diplomatic relations, which he hoped might become separate and confidential, with the Emperor Francis and the cabinet of Vienna. Having partaken of the frugal supper which the bivouac would alone afford even for the imperial table, Meerfeldt was at ten at night introduced into the Emperor's cabinet. By a singular coincidence, it was he who had come a suppliant on the part of the Emperor of Germany to solicit the armistice of Leoben: it was he who had conducted, on the part of the cabinet of Vienna, the treaty of Campo-Formio; and it was from his hand, on the night following the battle of Austerlitz, that the pencil note had come which gave the first opening to the conferences that led to the peace of Presburg. The mutations of fortune had now brought the same general to the Emperor's tent, when the latter in his turn had become the suppliant, and he was to solicit, not to concede, peace and salvation from his former Imperial opponents. He addressed to him some obliging expressions on the misfortune which he had sustained in being made prisoner, and dismissed him to the Austrian headquarters, stored with every imaginable argument that could be urged against continuing in the Russian alliance; and offering, on condition of an armistice being immediately concluded, to evacuate Germany, and retire behind the Rhine till the conclusion of a general peace.[1] "Adieu,

[1] Fain, ii. 412, 414. Odel. ii. 23.

general," said he, when he dismissed Meerfeldt on his parole; "when on my behalf you shall speak of an armistice to the two Emperors, I doubt not the voice which strikes their ears will be eloquent indeed in recollections."*

45. Mournful night at Napoleon's headquarters.

Napoleon's sense of the dangers of his situation was sufficiently evinced by his offering to retire from Germany on condition that an armistice was agreed to. He passed a melancholy night after Meerfeldt had departed, his tents being placed in the bottom of a dried fishpond, not far from the road which leads to Rochlitz, where they were pitched in the middle of the squares of the Old Guard. The cannon continued to boom occasionally on the side of Mark-Kleeberg through the whole night, where the advanced posts were almost touching each other. The most sombre presentiments filled the minds of the generals who attended on the Emperor. Ammunition was already becoming scarce, and no fresh supplies could be obtained; a few potatoes found in the fields were all the provisions the men could obtain in the country, and the stores in Leipsic would soon be exhausted. Certain ruin appeared to await them, when the army, which had not been able to discomfit the enemy to whom they had been opposed, was assailed in

* "Our political alliance," said Napoleon, "is broken up; but between your master and me there is another bond which is indissoluble. That it is which I invoke; for I shall always place confidence in the regard of my father-in-law. It is to him I shall never cease to appeal from all that passes here. You see how they attack me, and how I defend myself. Does your cabinet never weigh the consequences of such exasperation? If it is wise it will speedily do so: it can do so this evening; to-morrow it may perhaps be too late, for who can foretell the events of to-morrow? They deceive themselves in regard to my disposition: I ask nothing but to repose in the shadow of peace, and to dream of the happiness of France, after having dreamt of its glory. You are afraid of the sleep of the lion: you fear that you will never be easy after having pared his nails and cut his mane. You think only of repairing by a single stroke the calamities of twenty years; and, carried away by this idea, you never perceive the changes which time has made around you, and that now for Austria to gain at the expense of France, is to lose. Reflect on it, general: it is neither Austria, nor France, nor Prussia, singly, that will be able to arrest on the Vistula the inundation of a people half nomad, essentially conquering, and whose dominions extend from this to China."—Fain, ii. 412, 413.

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addition by a hundred thousand fresh troops, who would come up on the succeeding day. Still the Emperor, though fully aware of his danger, made no preparations against it; not a carriage was directed to the rear, not a bridge was thrown over the Elster; but, relying on the valour of his soldiers, his own good fortune, and the strength of Leipsic as a *point d'appui* to his centre, the mighty conqueror remained in moody obstinacy to await the stroke of fate.[1]

[1] Odel. ii. 23, 25. Jom. iv. 463. Rogniat, Art de la Guerre, 393, 394. Plotho, ii. 395-6. Better, i. 181.

46. The Allies defer the attack till the 18th.

The Allied sovereigns were too well aware of the advantages of their situation, either to fall into the snare which Napoleon had laid for them, by sending back Meerfeldt with proposals for an armistice, or to throw these advantages away by precipitating the attack before their whole forces had come up. Under pretence, therefore, of referring the proposals to the Emperor of Austria, Schwartzenberg eluded them altogether; and no answer was returned to them till after the French had recrossed the Rhine. Meanwhile the great reinforcements on which they relied were approaching. Bernadotte, on the 16th, had reached Landsberg, on his way back from the Elbe, to which he had been drawn by Napoleon's demonstrations against Berlin; Benningsen was at Cölditz, and Colloredo at Borna; so that all three might be expected to take part in the action in the evening of the following day. The attack, accordingly, was ordered for two o'clock in the afternoon of that day; but such was the badness of the roads to the southward, from the immense multitude of artillery and chariots which had passed over them, that Colloredo and Benningsen had not then come up, and did not reach their ground, the former till four, the latter till late in the evening. The attack was, therefore, adjourned till the following morning, when the troops were ordered to be in readiness by daybreak;[2] and no doubt was entertained of success, as the grand Allied army would then be reinforced by above fifty thousand

[2] Bout. 125, 126. Jom. iv. 464, 465. Die Grosse Chron. i. 841, 847.

combatants, besides those who joined Blucher and Bernadotte.

But although matters were thus favourable to the Allies on the ground where Napoleon and the Allied sovereigns commanded in person, to the south of Leipsic, affairs were far from being in an equally satisfactory state to the north of that town, where Blucher was opposed to Ney and Marmont. Reynier had now come up from Düben, which rendered him more than a match for the army of Silesia, weakened as that noble host was by six thousand men lost on the preceding day, and the incessant fighting which it had sustained since the commencement of the campaign. A violent cavalry action on the 17th, between Arrighi's dragoons and Wassilchikoff's Cossacks, on the banks of the Partha, had only terminated to the advantage of the Allies by their bringing up the reserve hussars, who at length drove the enemy back to the very walls of Leipsic. Everything, therefore, on that side depended upon bringing the Prince-Royal into action; but in that quarter a most alarming degree of backwardness had become visible, which threatened the cause of the Allies with the most serious consequences. Not only had Bernadotte, in pursuance of his usual system of saving the Swedes, so successfully applied at Gross Beeren and Dennewitz, arranged the troops of his own dominions a full march in the rear of the Russians and Prussians; but instead of directing them to Halle, as he was recommended, where they would have been, if not in a line with Blucher, at least not very far in his rear, he had moved the Russians only to Zörbig, while the Prussians and Swedes stretched by the Peterberg and Gröbzig, so far from the decisive point as to be of no service whatever in the crisis which was approaching.[1]

47. Dangerous state of the Alliedaffairs to the north of Leipsic.

Oct. 17.

Oct. 15.

[1] Lond. 160, 161. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 136. Plotho, ii. 397. Richter, ii. 269.

Fortunately for the Allies and the cause of European freedom, their interests were at this juncture supported, at the headquarters of the Prince-Royal of Sweden, by

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48. Vigorous efforts of Sir Charles Stewart to bring up Bernadotte.

men whose discernment showed them where the decisive point lay, and whose moral courage rendered them equal to the task of enforcing it upon the commander. Sir Charles Stewart and General Pozzo di Borgo* were officially attached to his headquarters on the part of their respective courts, and both possessed great influence with his Royal Highness; for the former had the disbursement of the British subsidies, and the latter was the accredited

* Charles André Pozzo di Borgo was born at Pozzo di Borgo, near Ajaccio, in Corsica, on 8th March 1768, in the same year as Napoleon. His history was throughout life so intimately blended with that of Napoleon, that in the age of astrology it would have been said that they were born under the influence of the same planets, with this difference, that their respective apogees and perigees were reversed. The family of the Pozzo di Borgo (*Puits de Village*, "well of the village,") was a very ancient one in Corsica, and belonged to the native race; while that of the Buonapartes and the Salicetti was descended from the Italians, whom the revolutions of the neighbouring peninsula had, in the course of ages, brought to seek refuge in its mountain solitudes. From his earliest years young Pozzo di Borgo belonged to the national party, and was closely allied with its noble hero, Paoli, who struggled for the preservation of old institutions and national independence: the Buonapartes, with Arena and Salicetti, were connected with the Jacobin clubs, and aimed, by French interference, at the overthrow of society. In 1789, Pozzo di Borgo, then in his twenty-second year, already secretary of the noblesse of Corsica, was sent as deputy of the nobles to the National Assembly. He spoke little at the tribune, but made an eloquent oration in the interest of the Girondists, to which party he belonged, on the war with Germany on the 16th July 1792. At the termination of the Constituent Assembly he returned to Corsica, and united with Paoli in the administration of the island. France, under the administration of the Girondists, was then dreaming of a federal union of little republics; and Paoli and Pozzo di Borgo, for a short period, deemed it practicable to realise that union among their rugged mountains. The Salicettis, Arenas, and Buonapartes, on the other hand, dwelling in the cities of the plain, were associated with their ardent population, and supported a republic one and indivisible, in order to obtain the constant support of the Jacobins of Paris. The influence of those families obtained from the Convention an order for Paoli and Pozzo di Borgo to attend at the bar of the Assembly to justify their conduct, at a time when obedience to such an order was certain death. In these perilous circumstances an assembly was held at Corse, the ancient capital of the island, at which it was resolved to disregard the decree of the Convention, and continue the administration of Paoli and Pozzo di Borgo. They declared "that it was not worthy of the dignity of the Corsican people to occupy themselves with the families Arena and Buonaparte, and that *they abandon them to their infamy and remorse, for having separated themselves from the national cause.*"

It is difficult to see, however, how Corsica could have maintained itself against its terrible neighbour; had not at this critical juncture an event occurred, which for a brief period enabled them to preserve their independence. Toulon had fallen into the hands of the Republic, and the English squadron, expelled from its spacious harbour, cast anchor before Ajaccio, in hopes of finding, in the national spirit of Corsica, some compensation for their recent

diplomatist and personal favourite of Alexander. Indefatigable were the efforts which these ardent men made at this crisis to overcome the backwardness of the Prince-Royal, and bring forward his powerful force, fifty thousand strong, to the support of Blucher, who was always in the front, and might be exposed from that cause, if not adequately backed, to the most serious danger. Not only did Sir Charles personally remonstrate, in the most

disaster. Paoli and Pozzo di Borgo gladly availed themselves of this fortunate circumstance to extricate their country from the tyranny of the Jacobins, and it was immediately declared an independent state under the protection of Great Britain. Soon after an assembly was summoned to construct a constitution for the island, on the model of that of England; and on the recommendation of Paoli, Pozzo di Borgo was appointed president. Upon Admiral Elliot, afterwards Lord Minto, the governor of the island, seeing him, and remarking that he appeared young for a situation of such importance, Paoli replied, "I will answer for him; he is a young man, as skilful in directing the people as in acting firmly on the field of battle." Pozzo di Borgo accordingly was elected, and immediately applied himself with vigour to organising the institutions of his country, not upon their ancient but an improved model. This was the turning point of his history: thenceforward he entered heart and soul into the preservation of order, and the objects of the European alliance. July 10, 1794.

The independence of Corsica under British influence, however, existed only two years. The dense urban population, thirsting for democracy, soon proved more than a match for the scattered mountaineers, attached to old institutions: the British succours were far distant, and given in a parsimonious spirit, and the island again fell under the government of France. Compelled to leave his country, Pozzo di Borgo, with Paoli, embarked on board a frigate of the English fleet, and landed at *Elba*, as if a mysterious destiny had in every point of his career linked his fate with that of Napoleon. From thence he came to London, where his capacity and information soon gained for him the confidence of Mr Pitt, who employed him in several diplomatic missions to Vienna. From thence he passed into the service of Russia, where in like manner he won the confidence of Alexander, by whom he was employed as diplomatic agent at the court of Naples, when Queen Caroline made her unfortunate essay in arms, on the eve of the battle of Austerlitz. Obliged to return by the peace of Presburg to St Petersburg, he received the rank of colonel in the army, and was attached to the Emperor's suite, in which capacity he was actively employed in the campaigns of Jena and Eylau, and was intrusted with several diplomatic missions of importance—particularly to Vienna and Constantinople. When the peace of Tilsit again threw Russia into the French alliance, he had the prudence to request permission to travel; but in a farewell interview with Alexander he used these remarkable expressions, which subsequent events rendered prophetic: —"The alliance of your Majesty with France will not be of long duration: I know the profound dissimulation and insatiable ambition of Buonaparte. At this moment your Majesty has one arm held by Persia, and another by Turkey, while Napoleon presses on your breast. When you have loosed your hands, the weight will be more easily shaken off the breast. Adieu for a few years."

During the memorable campaign of 1809, Pozzo di Borgo was at Vienna, aiding the Austrian cabinet with his counsels, and animating it by his spirit.

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energetic manner, on the 14th and 15th against the pernicious and eccentric direction which Bernadotte was giving to his troops, and which had the effect of excluding them from all share in the action of the 16th; but on the morning of that day he addressed to him a written remonstrance, penned with respect but military frankness, and breathing a warm but not undeserved spirit of patriotic indignation.[1]*

[1] Lond. 162, 169.

These efforts, which were vigorously seconded by Blucher and Pozzo di Borgo, at length produced the

At the peace of Vienna, after the battle of Wagram, Napoleon, aware of his weight, made it an express condition that he should be banished from the Austrian dominions as well as from Russia. To this last condition Alexander was obliged to consent; and on this occasion Pozzo wrote a noble farewell letter, resigning his appointment in the Muscovite service, adding, "The time is not far distant when your Majesty will recall me to your service." He then repaired to Constantinople, the sole route by which at that period he could reach England, and arrived in London in October 1810, when his value was immediately discerned by Lord Castlereagh, then minister of foreign affairs, as it had formerly been by Mr Pitt. His prophecy to the Czar was soon accomplished: the terrible war of 1812 broke out: Alexander recalled his faithful servant and true prophet to his side: he was sent on the way to Stockholm, where he contributed to overcome the indecision of Bernadotte, and joined the Emperor at Kalisch, as he was on the eve of signing the Grand Alliance which delivered Europe.

As soon as he arrived, Alexander admitted Pozzo di Borgo to a private interview, in which, after recalling to his recollection his prophecy, he treated him in the kindest and most confidential manner, and, taking him by the arm, walked out with him in that manner at a parade of the Guards. The courtiers, who had received him coldly from the recollection of his former exile, were immediately all smiles: every one, regarding his fortune as made, hastened to tender to him their congratulations. Constantly attached to the headquarters of the Czar, he shared his entire confidence, and took a prominent part in the important negotiations with Great Britain and Austria which followed. He was chosen with Sir Charles Stewart, from his known energy and decision of character, for the delicate and important task of holding Bernadotte to the charge during the campaign of Leipsic, which duty he executed with equal ability and success. He was at Alexander's side when he entered Paris: he took a leading part in Napoleon's dethronement: and was long ambassador of Russia at the court of the Tuileries, when his ancient rival at Ajaccio was an exile on the rock of St Helena.—*Personal knowledge*;—and CAPEFIGUE, *Diplomates Européens*, 124, 143; one of the ablest works of that eloquent and accomplished author.

* These letters are very curious, and remain enduring monuments both of the tortuous policy of Bernadotte at that period, and of the clear military discernment and unflinching moral courage of the Marquis of Londonderry. At 9 A.M., on the 16th, he wrote to the Prince-Royal as follows:—"According to the report of General Blucher, the enemy has quitted Delitsch. It is of the

49. Which at length proves successful.

desired effect. The circuitous sweep, indeed, which Bernadotte had given to his troops, saved Ney from destruction, and doubled Blucher's losses on the 16th; but at length he was brought forward to his ground. On the night of the 16th, Bernadotte slept at Landsberg, and on the evening of the 17th he was on the heights of Breitenfeld, immediately in the rear of Blucher's army. His conduct on this occasion, as on many others during the campaign, was not owing either to want of military discernment or physical resolution, but to secret views of political ambition. He clearly foresaw, and anxiously

last importance, according to my ideas, that the army of your Royal Highness should move to the left behind Delitsch; the marshes and defiles render such a movement free of all risk, and your Royal Highness will then be in a situation to take a part in the approaching battle, which will be more decisive with your army and military talents. As the enemy's whole forces are in the environs of Leipsic, permit me to observe that the moments are precious. The English nation has its eye upon you: it is my duty to address you with frankness. The English nation will never believe that you are indifferent, provided the enemy is beaten, whether you take a part in the battle or not. I venture to beseech your Royal Highness, if you remain in the second line, to send forward Captain Bogue with the rocket brigade, to General Blucher, to act with the cavalry." Bernadotte, however, still hung back, and, by Blucher's desire, Sir Charles galloped to his headquarters, and found the Russians only at Landsberg; *the Prussians a march behind the Russians, and the Swedes a march behind the Prussians.* He could not obtain an interview with the Prince-Royal: but got from General Adlercrantz a promise to send forward three thousand horse next morning. Sir Charles then returned to Blucher, took part in the action, and after it was over rode back to Halle, where Bernadotte had still not arrived, and wrote to him the following laconic epistle:—"Halle, 9 P.M., 16th Oct.—I have just come from General Blucher's field of battle. I have the honour to lay before your Royal Highness the details of the action. I venture to supplicate your Royal Highness to march on Taucha the moment you receive this letter. There is not an instant to lose: your Royal Highness has pledged your word to me to do so. I must now address you as a friend. *I speak now as a soldier; and, if you do not commence your march, you will repent it as long as you live.*" To a soldier and a gentleman this was sufficient, and Bernadotte at length moved next morning, and reached his ground on the evening of the same day. He was, however, most indignant at this freedom, and the first time he saw Sir Charles afterwards, he said, "Comment, Général Stewart! quel droit avez-vous de m'écrire? Ne rappelez-vous pas que je suis Prince de Suède, *un des plus grands généraux de l'age?* Et si vous étiez à ma place, que penseriez-vous si quelqu'un vous écrivait comme vous m'avez écrit?" The Gascons are always true to their name and character. He soon, however, recovered his good-humour; and when the Marquis and Marchioness of Londonderry visited Sweden in 1838, on their way to St Petersburg, he received them, much to his credit, with the most distinguished kindness and hospitality.—LONDONDERRY, 162, 177; *War in Germany;* and *personal information.*

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desired, the fall of Napoleon; but he had no wish to have a hand in completing either his destruction or that of his army. He was averse to both, as much from a natural feeling of patriotic attachment to the land of his birth, as from a conviction that such a catastrophe would prove an insurmountable bar to his own ascent of the vacant throne, on which he had already set his heart.[1]

[1] Lond. 162, 170. Die Grosse Chron. i. 345.

50. Changes in Napoleon's dispositions during the night.

Atlas, Plate 89.

Considerable changes, during the night of the 17th, were made by Napoleon in the disposition of his troops. At two in the morning, seeing that no answer had been returned to the propositions he had sent through Meerfeldt, he prepared for battle, and made the requisite contraction of the circle which his troops occupied, to enable them to withstand the prodigious force by which they were to be assailed. He had now brought up his whole reserves from Düben; and Reynier, with his Saxons, now reduced to eight thousand men, had joined the standards of Ney on the Partha. The troops effected a change of front to the left, the left wing being thrown back, and Connewitz, on the extreme right, serving as the pivot. Poniatowski remained fixed there, on the edge of the Elster; and the whole army, now not numbering more than a hundred and fifty thousand combatants, was arranged in a semicircle, facing outwards from that point to the extreme left, which rested on the Partha to the north of Leipsic. The line, thus contracted, abandoned Wachau, Liebertwolkwitz, and the heights in their rear, the object of such fierce contention on the preceding day; it ran from Connewitz to Probstheyda, in which last village Victor was stationed. Macdonald fell back to Holzhausen; Lauriston at Stötteritz was a reserve to the two latter corps; while the Imperial Guard, under Napoleon in person on the Thonberg, near the Tobacco-windmill, still occupied a central position, from which he could succour any point that might be peculiarly menaced. Bertrand remained in his old position at Lindenau, and

detachments in observation merely occupied the villages to the westward of Tweinainsdorf and Milkau, round to Ney's army, which was in position immediately to the north of Leipsic on the Partha ; Reynier at Paunsdorf, opposite Taucha ; Souham at Santa Thecla ; and Marmont at Neutzsch. Uneasy about his retreat, Napoleon repaired at three in the morning to Lindenau, where he had a conference with Bertrand, who received orders to push forward an advanced guard and occupy Weissenfels, on the road to Mayence, which was done before noon on the same day. The position of the French army around Leipsic, with its flanks secured from being turned by the Elster and the Partha, and the old walls of the town itself as a great redoubt in its centre, was undoubtedly strong, and hardly liable, if bravely defended by such a force as Napoleon's, to be forced by any masses of assailants, how great soever. But it had a frightful defect, that it had but one issue for so vast a multitude of men, horse, cannon, and chariots in rear : resembling thus, in a striking manner, the position of the Russians, with the Alle at their backs, in front of Friedland,[1] of which Napoleon had taken such decisive advantage in the first Polish war.[2]

[1] *Ante*, ch. xlvi. § 59.
[2] Bout. 128, 129. Jom. iv. 464, 466. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 137, 138. Vaud. i. 211, 212. Die Feldzug der Sachsen, 317. Plotho, ii. 388, 390. Die Grosse Chron. i. 865.

51. Dispositions of Prince Schwartzenberg for the attack. Oct. 18.

Schwartzenberg, on his side, made the requisite dispositions for following up his advantages, and pressing upon the columns of the French upon all sides of the narrow circle into which they had now retired. The grand army of Bohemia, and Benningsen's reserve from Poland, were formed into three columns ; the right, under Benningsen's orders, composed of his own army, the corps of Klenau, and Ziethen's Prussians, was directed to advance from Gross Pössnau to Holzhausen, the centre, under Barclay de Tolly, who had the corps of Kleist and Wittgenstein under his command, with the grenadiers and Guards in reserve, assembled near Gossa, and was to advance straight upon Wachau ; while the left, under the direction of the Prince of Hesse Homburg, consisting of

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Meerfeldt's and Colloredo's Austrians, his own reserve, and Lichtenstein's men, was to move forward by the edge of the Elster, from Connewitz and Mark-Kleeberg, on Dolitz and Leipsic. To the north of Leipsic, also, the Prince-Royal and Blucher, now nearly a hundred thousand strong, had made their arrangements for a decisive engagement: the former, with the corps of Langeron, as well as his own troops, was to cross the Partha, turn Ney's right, and force him back upon Leipsic, from the side of Taucha, and the road to Wittenberg; while Blucher, with his two remaining corps of Sacken and York, was to remain on the right bank of the Partha, and drive all before him who should remain on that side of the river. The forces of the Allies were more numerous than had ever been assembled in one field during modern times, for they mustered two hundred and eighty thousand combatants, with nearly fourteen hundred guns; and in intrinsic strength and military equipment, far exceeded any force ever collected for warlike purposes since the beginning of the world.* The awful nature of the contest which was approaching, its momentous results, its uncertain event, had impressed every mind with solemn feelings; which was increased by the confused murmur which arose from the innumerable multitude, the neighing of the horses, and rolling of the guns, as the preparations for the conflict commenced.[1] But when they were completed, these feelings gave place to military ardour, and universal enthusiasm animated the men when

[1] Bout. 128, 131. Jom. iv. 466, 467. Vaud. i. 212, 213. Kausler, 945, 946. Plotho, ii. 401, 402. Die Grosse Chron. i. 865.

* Mardonius at Platæa is said to have had 300,000 men, and the Gauls, when they blockaded Cæsar in his lines round Alesia, had 240,000. According to Quintus Curtius, Darius at Arbela had 200,000 foot and 40,000 horse, (L. iv. c. 12, § 13;) a number much more probable, of real fighting men, than 1,000,000, which Plutarch (Alexander, c. 54) and Arrian (L. iii. c. 2) assign. In India, after the bloody battle with Porus, Alexander had 90,000 infantry and 10,000 horse, with 900 chariots, (Q. Curtius, ix. 4, 16.) Bajazet, at the battle of Angora, where he was defeated by Timour, is said to have had 400,000 horse and foot under his banners.—GIBBON, xii. 28, c. 65. But none of these armies could bear any comparison, in the number of real soldiers and the military strength, with the host which fought under the Allied banners at Leipsic, which was 280,000, with 1384 pieces of cannon.

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52. Commencement of the battle, and success of the Allies on their left.

the order to advance was given, and the immense host began to move forward against the enemy.*

At length the battle of giants commenced. The 18TH OCTOBER dawned, and the last hour of the French Empire began to toll. At nine, Napoleon took his station on the Thonberg: the enemy's columns were already approaching with rapid strides on all sides, and their heads were soon seen surmounting the hills of Wachau, and driving, like chaff before the wind, the French detachments which were stationed to retard their advance in the intermediate villages. Inexpressibly awful was the spectacle which their advance afforded to the agitated multitude who thronged the steeples of Leipsic. As far as the eye could reach, the ground was covered with an innumerable multitude of men and horses; long deep masses marked the march of the infantry; dazzling lines of light indicated the squadrons of cavalry; the glancing of the bayonets in the rays of the sun, sparkled like crests of foam on a troubled ocean; while a confused murmur from their ranks sounded like the roar of a distant cataract.

> ——————— "In mighty quadrate joined
> Of union irresistible, moved on
> In silence their bright legions, to the sound
> Of instrumental harmony, that breathed
> Heroic ardour to adventurous deeds,
> Under their godlike leaders, in the cause
> Of God and his Messiah. On they move,
> Indissolubly firm: nor obvious hill,
> Nor straitening vale, nor wood, nor stream, divides
> Their perfect ranks."†

The Allied left, under the Prince of Hesse Homburg, first came into action, and its success was brilliant and immediate. The resistance of the Poles on the banks of

* "Tum vero universa futuri discriminis facies in oculis erat: armis insignibus equi virique splendebant: et, omnia intentiore cura præparari apud hostem, sollicitudo prætorum agmina sua interequitantium ostendebat: ac pleraque inania, sicut fremitus hominum, equorum hinnitus, armorum internitentium fulgor sollicitam expectatione mentem turbaverant."—QUINTUS CURTIUS, iv. 13, § 1.

† *Paradise Lost*, Book vi. 60.

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the Elster, under the brave Poniatowski, proud of the rank of marshal of France, worthily conferred on him the day before by the Emperor, was indeed heroic; but they were unable to withstand the superior numbers and vehement attacks of the Austrians, under Bianchi and Colloredo, and gave ground. The danger on that side was soon imminent; for the victorious Austrians, driving the Poles and the weak remains of Augereau's corps before them, soon passed Dolitz and Lossnig, and menaced Connewitz and the suburbs of Leipsic—the only line of retreat to the army. Napoleon immediately repaired to the spot with two divisions of the Young Guard, under Oudinot, while the Old, under Mortier, was stationed in the rear, in the suburbs of Leipsic. The steady countenance of these veterans restored the combat; Hesse Homburg was wounded; and though the Poles were driven back, after hard fighting, to Connewitz, the action on this side ceased to be alarming, and all Bianchi's efforts could not dislodge Poniatowski from that village, even with the aid of Giulay's corps, which Schwartzenberg despatched to his support.[1]

[1] Fain, ii. 418, 420. Bout. 130, 131. Vaud. i. 214. Jom. iv. 470. Plotho, ii. 402.

53. Desperate conflict at Probstheyda in the centre.

The village of Probstheyda formed the salient angle of the position occupied by the French around Leipsic, and as such it became, early in the day, the object of the most vehement contention between the opposite parties. Seen from the steeples of the city during the prolonged contest which surrounded its buildings, it resembled a rocky cape advanced in a tempestuous ocean, against which the surging waves incessantly beat. In the first instance, the progress of the Allies in the centre was rapid. Liebertwolkwitz and Wachau, the scenes of such bloody struggles on the 16th, were abandoned after a slight combat of advanced posts; the Allied artillery was hurried forward amidst loud shouts to the summit of the hills of Wachau, and soon two hundred pieces of cannon, arrayed along the heights, began to send an iron tempest into the French columns. But meanwhile Napoleon's

batteries were not idle. Sensible of the inferiority of their pieces in point of number to those of the enemy, the men endeavoured to supply the deficiency by the rapidity of their fire, and their guns were worked with extraordinary vigour. Every cannon that could be brought to bear on either side was hurried to the front; and soon eight hundred pieces of artillery played on the hostile masses, in a space of not more than half a league in breadth in the centre of the army. In the midst of this tremendous fire, Prince Augustus of Prussia and General Pirsch received orders, with Kleist's corps, to carry Probstheyda. Swiftly they moved over the intervening open space, and entered the village with such vigour, that they reached its centre before the onset could be arrested; but there they were met by Victor and Lauriston, at the head of dense masses, who combated with such resolution that they were driven back.[1]

[1] Fain, ii. 420, 421. Bout. 131, 132. Jom. iv. 470, 471. Vaud. i. 214, 215. Die Grosse Chron. i. 871, 874. Bign. xii. 405.

54. A second attack on Probstheyda is repulsed by Napoleon in person.

Nothing daunted by this bloody repulse, Prince Augustus re-formed his men, and again rushed into the village, followed by Wittgenstein's Russians and nearly the whole of Kleist's corps. Such was the vehemence of their onset, that the French were entirely expelled; the fugitives and wounded overspread the plain which extended towards Leipsic. Imposing masses at the same time displayed themselves towards Holzhausen, on the French left, and the centre seemed on the point of being forced. Napoleon instantly hastened to the spot with the remaining two divisions of the Young Guard: the steady columns made their way through the crowd of fugitives who were leaving the rear of the centre, and blocked up all the roads. Amidst the clouds of dust which obscured the view, and the cries of the combatants, which drowned even the roar of the artillery, he preserved his usual calmness and decision, and, pushing forward to the front, arrested the tumult with two battalions of the Guard, and did not return to his station beside the windmill till he had entirely expelled the enemy from the village.[2] Again the Russians under Wittgenstein, and

[2] Die Grosse Chron. i. 873, 874. Plotho, ii. 406. Fain, ii. 419, 420. Bout. 131, 132. Jom. iv. 470, 471. Vaud. i. 214. Lab. i. 393.

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Benningsen's reserves, were brought up to the attack, and dislodged the French; but a third time the invincible soldiers of Lauriston and Victor recovered their post, and hurled back the assailants with dreadful loss into the Allied ranks.

55. Operations on the Allied right.

On the right, Ziethen's Prussians marched against Holzhausen and Zuckethausen, at eleven o'clock in the forenoon, followed by a considerable part of Benningsen's Russians in reserve. In moving up they were charged in flank by Sebastiani's dragoons; but Pahlen's and Tchaplitz's cuirassiers speedily repulsed the attack, and drove back the enemy's horse with great loss into their own lines. At the same time Platoff, with six thousand Cossacks, by a circuitous sweep turned the extreme left of the French on this side, and threatened the rear of Macdonald's corps. He, in consequence, abandoned Holzhausen, and fell back to Stotteritz, warmly pursued by the victorious Prussians; and the Allied sovereigns, who had now advanced their headquarters to the sheepfold of Meitsdorf, ordered an attack on that village. Such, however, was the vehemence of the fire of the French batteries of a hundred guns, posted on either side of Probstheyda,—which, seeing their rear thus threatened, wheeled about, and opened with terrible execution on the flank of the attacking column,—that, after having all but carried the village, the assailants were forced to recoil, glad to seek shelter in the nearest hollows from the fearful tempest. Still further to the Allied right, Bubna's light horse, with a body of Platoff's Cossacks, pushed across the plain beyond the reach of the combatants, and opened up a communication with Bernadotte's outposts, which soon made their appearance from the direction of Taucha: united, they fell upon the rear of the Würtemberg brigade of Normann, which straightway abandoned the colours of France, and ranged itself in the ranks of the Fatherland.[1]

[1] Kausler, 948. Bout. 132. Jom. iv. 471. Vaud. i. 215. Plotho, ii. 402. Die Grosse Chron. i. 878, 882.

Schwartzenberg, finding that the resistance of the enemy to the south of Leipsic was so obstinate, and that the

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assault of the villages was attended with such a fearful loss of life, and having received information of decisive success to the north, which would soon render the enemy's position untenable, ordered his columns, over the whole semicircle to the south, to seek refuge in the nearest hollows from the dreadful effect of the enemy's batteries; and for the remainder of the day confined his attack on that side to another and more powerful arm. The whole cannon of the Grand Army, amounting to above eight hundred pieces, were brought forward to the front, arranged in the form of a vast semicircle two leagues in length, from Lossnitz by the ridges of Wachau towards Holzhausen; and during the remainder of the day they kept up an incessant and most destructive fire on the enemy's columns. The French batteries in that direction, which numbered above five hundred pieces, answered with unconquerable vigour; but, independent of their inferiority in point of number, the position which the Allied guns occupied was far superior, they being stationed in great part on the heights commanding the whole plain, which the enemy had occupied on the preceding day, while their semicircular position caused their concentric fire to fall with double severity on the dense and close masses of Napoleon's forces—the fire of whose batteries, on the other hand, spreading like a fan towards a wide circumference, was attended, comparatively speaking, with little effect.[1]

56. The Allies withdraw their columns, and open a combined fire of cannon.

[1] Odel. ii. 30, 31. Vaud. i. 215. Bout. 133. Fain, ii. 428. Plotho, i. 406, 407. Feldz. der Sachsen, 322.

Galled beyond endurance by the frightful discharge, Lauriston's and Victor's troops repeatedly, and almost involuntarily, rushed out of Probstheyda, and advanced with heroic resolution against the hostile batteries; but, as soon as they came within the range of grapeshot, the heads of the dense columns were swept away, and the broken remains recoiled, horror-struck, behind the shelter of the houses. For four terrible hours this awful scene lasted; the Allied batteries continuing till nightfall, like a girdle of flame, their dreadful fire, while the French

57. Heroic resistance of the French.

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masses, devoted to death, still closed their ranks as they wasted away, but with unconquerable resolution maintained their ground. Close to Napoleon himself twelve guns were dismounted in a few minutes; from the ranks which immediately surrounded him, some thousand wounded were carried back to Leipsic. In Probstheyda, Vial, Rochambeau, and several generals of inferior note, were killed, and great numbers wounded during this dreadful period. But still their columns stood firm beneath the tempest, exhibiting a sublime example of human valour rising superior to all the storms of fate.[1]

[1] Fain, ii. 428, 429. Odel. ii. 30, 31. Vaud. i. 215. Bout. 133, 134. Feldz. der Sachsen, 323, 324.

58. Operations of Blucher and Bernadotte against Ney.

While this terrible conflict was going on to the south of Leipsic, Ney and Marmont had to maintain their ground against still more overwhelming odds on the banks of the Partha. At ten in the morning, Blucher, leaving the corps of Sacken and York on the right bank, in pursuance of the plan agreed on, crossed that river, and marched to join the Prince-Royal, who, on his part, broke up at eight from Breitenfeld, and passed at Taucha and Mockau. Their united force, when they were both assembled, was little short of ninety thousand combatants, exceeding by fully forty thousand men the troops which Ney could oppose to them; and they moved direct upon Leipsic by the left bank of the river. The French general, finding himself thus outnumbered, adopted the same change of front which Napoleon had followed to the south of Leipsic, and drawing back his men to Schönfeld, Sellershausen, and Stuntz, extended across to Reynier's corps, which was established at Paunsdorf. Thus the whole French army was now arranged in a circle around the city, having its right, under Poniatowski, resting on the Pleisse at Connewitz, and the extreme left, under Marmont, at the confluence of the Partha and Elster, below the gate of Rosenthal.[2]

[2] Kausler, 950. Bout. 135. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 141. Die Grosse Chron. i. 881, 882.

The first incident which occurred on this side was of ominous import, and depressed the French as much as it elated the Allies. A brigade of Saxon cavalry, as soon

as the Russians approached the heights of Heiterblick, where it was stationed, instead of resisting, passed over to the Allied ranks. This example was speedily followed by two Saxon brigades of foot, with their whole artillery, consisting of twenty-two pieces; and the Würtemberg horse of Normann, as already noticed, immediately after went over also to the enemy. This defection in the middle of the battle was the more discreditable, that Napoleon, anticipating something of the kind, had eight days before offered such as chose to withdraw from his ranks, the liberty of doing so.* This unparalleled event caused great consternation, as well it might, in Reynier's corps; for not only were they weakened, when already inferior in force, by fully eight thousand men, but such was the exasperation of the Saxon cannoneers, that they pointed their guns, immediately after going over, against the French lines, and tore in pieces the ranks of their former comrades by a point-blank discharge. The French general, reduced to the single division Durutte, and threatened on the right by Bubna from the Bohemian army, and on the left by Bulow from that of the Prince-Royal, was immediately compelled to fall back to Sellershausen, almost close to Leipsic. Ney, informed of the catastrophe, hastened to reinforce Reynier by Delmas' division of his own corps; while Marmont, to keep abreast of the retrograde movement in other points, withdrew his troops in a similar degree, with the exception of his extreme left, which still stood firm at Schönfeld.[1]

59. Defection of the Saxons, and retreat of the French centre and right to the north of Leipsic.

[1] Jom. iv. 471, 472. Bout. 136, 137. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 142. Lond. 172. Die Grosse Chron. i. 884, 887. Plotho, ii. 411.

The Allied troops, excited to the greatest degree by these favourable circumstances, now pressed forward at all points to encircle the enemy, and force them back, at the point of the bayonet, into the suburbs of Leipsic; while the French, roused to the highest pitch of indignation by the defection of their allies, made the most

60. Napoleon's effort on that side is defeated.

* "Huit jours auparavant, l'Empereur, passant en revue les Saxes, leur avait dit que ceux qui ne voulaient plus combattre pour nous étaient libres de quitter le service."—BIGNON, xii. 406; ODELEBEN, ii. 24.

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desperate and heroic resistance. No sooner was Napoleon informed of the defection of the Saxons, and that Schönfeld, almost a suburb of Leipsic, was threatened, than, feeling the vital importance of preserving that city as his only line of retreat, he hastened with the cuirassiers of Nansouty, and a division of the Young Guard, to the menaced point. It was full time that succour should arrive; for when these veterans came up, Durutte and Delmas had been driven back close to the town; the Swedish troops had penetrated to Kuhl-Garten, on the very edge of the walls; while Langeron, furiously assaulting Schönfeld, had three times penetrated into that village, and as often been dislodged by the heroic courage of Marmont's men. Nansouty and the Guards were immediately pushed forward by Durutte in the direction where there was a sort of chasm, filled up only by a cordon of light troops, between the extreme right of the army of Bohemia under Bubna, and the extreme left of the Prince-Royal under Bulow. This powerful corps rapidly made its way, almost unresisted, in at the opening; but before it had advanced far, it was assailed with such vigour on the right by Bubna, and on the left by Bulow, supported by the English rocket brigade, under the able direction of Captain Bogue, that it was forced to retire, after Delmas had been slain, with very heavy loss.* At the same time, Schönfeld was vehemently attacked by Count Langeron, and as gallantly defended by Marmont: five times did the Russians penetrate in with irresistible vigour, and five times were they driven out by the devoted courage of the French. Marmont's aide-de-camp was struck down by his side;[1] General

[1] Bout. 137, 138. Jom. iv. 474, 475. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 142. Lond. 172, 173. Kausler, 950. Die Grosse Chron. i. 896, 897, 900.

* This was the first occasion that this new and most formidable implement of modern warfare was brought into action. Such was its effect upon the enemy, that a solid square of French infantry, upon the flank of which it opened its fire, surrendered in a few minutes. Hardly was this brilliant success achieved, when the commander of the brigade, Captain Bogue, a noble and patriotic officer, struck on the breast by a cannon-ball, expired. It was first introduced in the Peninsula at the passage of the Adour in February 1814.—*Vide* LONDONDERRY, 172.

Compans was wounded—General Frederick killed, in this terrible struggle. At length, at six at night, it was carried a sixth time amidst terrific cheers, and remained finally in the hands of the Russians ; while four thousand of their bravest soldiers and an equal number of its intrepid defenders lay dead, or weltering in their blood, in its streets.

61. Close of the battle, and preparations of Napoleon for retreat.

Such was the exhaustion of both parties by the long continuance of this mortal struggle, that neither for the remainder of the day were able to undertake any considerable operations. Gradually, however, and almost insensibly, the Allies gained ground on every side. Bulow, following up his success against Durutte and Nansouty, carried the villages of Stuntz and Sellershausen, and drove the French on the north-east back under the very walls of Leipsic ; while Sacken attacked the suburb of Rosenthal, from which he was only repelled by the devoted valour of Dombrowski's Poles and Arrighi's dragoons. But the near approach of the enemy on all sides now made it evident to Napoleon that the position of Leipsic had become untenable, and dispositions were made for a retreat. He had early in the forenoon reinforced Bertrand, at Lindenau, with a considerable part of the reserves at Leipsic ; and that general, driving Giulay before him, had succeeded in opening the road to Weissenfels, so that the principal line of their retreat was secured. Towards evening the carriages and baggage of the army began to defile in that direction ; and Blucher, observing the long files of chariots which filled the highway to France, immediately sent intimation to Schwartzenberg that the enemy was about to retreat, and despatched York's corps, which had been kept in reserve during the day, to move upon Halle in order to anticipate his columns upon the left of the Saale.[1]

[1] Plotho, ii. 414. Bour. 138, 139. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 144. Kausler, 951, 952. Richter, ii. 299, 300.

Night came, more terrible even than day after such a conflict ; for with it was brought the memory of the past, and the anticipation of the future. To the incessant roll

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62. Night council held by Napoleon on the field.

of musketry, and the roar of two thousand cannon, succeeded a silence yet more awful, interrupted only by a casual shot from the sentries as they paced their rounds, and the hollow murmur which, over a field of such vast extent, arose from the cries of the horses and the groans of the wounded. Soon the bivouacs were spread, and the heavens, in the whole circumference of the horizon, were illuminated by the ruddy glow of innumerable watch-fires. Silent and sad, Napoleon's marshals and generals assembled around him. Little was said in the deliberations which succeeded; the position of the enemy, the dreadful circle of bivouac flames which surrounded them, the dead and the dying who environed them on every side, told but too plainly how near and imminent the danger had become. Sorbier and Dulauloy, the commanders of the artillery, were requested to report on the condition of the army's ammunition. They stated that above two hundred thousand cannon-shot had been discharged during the battle, and to renew it was impossible without thirty or forty thousand fresh troops, and some hundred caissons of ammunition. Neither could be obtained; for the last sabre and bayonet had been brought up on the preceding day; the grand park of ammunition had been deposited in Torgau, which was no longer accessible, and Magdeburg and Erfurth were the nearest depots of provisions. During this eventful conference, Napoleon, overcome with fatigue, fell asleep in the chair on which he sat; his hands rested negligently folded on his breast, and his generals, respecting the respite of misfortune, preserved a profound silence. Suddenly, at the end of a quarter of an hour, he awoke, and casting a look of astonishment on the circle which surrounded him, exclaimed—"Am I awake, or is it a dream?" Soon recollecting, however, what had happened, he returned to Leipsic, where he resumed his wonted energy of mind,[1] and spent the remainder of the night in dictating orders to the generals and commanders

[1] Odel. ii. 34, 35. Fain, ii. 430, 431. Die Grosse Chron. i. 906, 907. Bign. xii. 410.

of fortresses which were to be abandoned. Soon after daybreak, he sent a message to the King of Saxony, announcing his intention to retreat, and leaving it to him either to follow his fortunes, or remain where he was, and conclude a separate peace with the Allies.

63. Dreadful state of Leipsic during the night.

No words can describe the state of horror and confusion in which the inhabitants of Leipsic were kept during the whole night which followed the battle. The prodigious multitude of wounded who had been brought in during the day, had filled to overflowing every house it contained; the maimed and the dying were lying, without either bandages for their wounds or covering for their bodies, in the streets; while the incessant rolling of artillery waggons and caissons, on every avenue leading to Lindenau, the cries of the drivers, the neighing of the horses as the wheels of the carriages were locked together, and the continued march of the columns, kept every eye open, in that scene of unutterable woe, during the whole night. At eight at night, Napoleon left his bivouac on the Thonberg, and took up his quarters in the Prussian Hotel. His horses were ordered to be ready to start at a moment's notice; but he himself sat up till daylight, with Berthier, Maret, and Caulaincourt, receiving reports and dictating orders. The King of Saxony, amidst the wreck of his fortunes, was chiefly inconsolable on account of the defection of his troops during the battle, and repeatedly requested counsel from Napoleon how he should act in the crisis. But the Emperor had the generosity to leave him altogether unfettered in the course he was to pursue; and more than once expressed his admiration of the constancy of a prince who showed himself the same now, when surrounded by disaster, as when he inscribed on his triumphal arches the words, "To Napoleon, the grateful Frederick Augustus."[1] The parting of the two sovereigns was a noble and touching interview worthy of dramatic representation in future times, for it was the separation

[1] Fain, ii. 432, 433. Odel. ii. 36, 37. Die Grosse Chron. i. 908, 915. Bign. xii. 411.

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of the first in genius from the first in elevated feeling and fidelity in misfortune.

64. Dispositions of the French for a retreat on the following morning.

Early on the morning of the 19th, the Allied generals made preparations for a general attack on Leipsic. By daybreak the French army was in full retreat on all sides. Victor and Augereau, with the whole five corps of cavalry, defiled across the suburb of Lindenau, and issued forth over the chaussée which traversed the marshes of the Elster. But this was the sole issue for the army: one single bridge over that river was to receive the prodigious concourse of soldiers and carriages; for no orders to form other bridges had been given, excepting one of wood, which speedily gave way under the multitude by which it was thronged. Reynier, with the division Durutte, which alone remained to him, was charged with the defence of the suburb of Rosenthal; Ney withdrew his troops into the eastern suburbs; while the corps of Lauriston, Macdonald, and Poniatowski entered the town and took a position behind the barriers of the south. They were destined to the honourable post of the rearguard; but, though the two former still numbered twenty-five thousand combatants, the Poles had been reduced, by their two days' bloody fighting on the banks of the Elster, to two thousand seven hundred men.* The total loss of the French army, in the two preceding days, had been fully forty thousand men; but nearly sixty thousand were still in Leipsic, besides an equal number who were defiling on the road to France: the barriers were all strongly palisaded; the adjacent walls and houses loopholed; and such a force, defending house by house the suburbs of the city so strengthened, could certainly, it was hoped,[1] make good the post till the

[1] Fain, ii. 433. Kausler, 852. Odel. ii. 38, 39. Vaud. i. 219. Die Grosse Chron. i. 913, 914.

* "Prince," said Napoleon to Poniatowski, "you will defend the suburb of the south."—"Sire," replied he, "I have few followers left."—"What then?" rejoined Napoleon, "you will defend it with what you have?"—"Ah! Sire," replied the descendant of the Jagellons, "we are all ready to die for your Majesty."—FAIN, ii. 434.

retreat of the ammunition waggons and cannon was effected.

65. Dispositions of the Allies for the assault of Leipsic.

No sooner were the Allied troops made aware of the preparations in the French army for a retreat, than a universal cry of joy burst from the ranks; the whole army, almost by an involuntary movement, stood to their arms, and loudly demanded to be led on to the assault. The Allied sovereigns hastened to profit by this universal burst of enthusiasm, and their dispositions were promptly made. Sacken advanced against the suburb of Halle, supported by Langeron as a reserve. Bulow prepared to storm the Hinter-Thor and Kuhl-Garten Thor, on the north; Woronzoff was to move against the barrier of Grimma, on the north-east; while Benningsen and the advanced columns of the Grand Army assaulted the Sand, Windmühlen, and Munz barriers, on the east and south. A prodigious multitude of artillery waggons and chariots obstructed the approaches to the town in that direction; and the French troops, lining all the walls, gardens, enclosures, and windows of the suburbs, were evidently preparing for a desperate resistance. On the other hand, the Allied columns, flushed with victory and burning with enthusiasm, pushed rapidly forward with inexpressible ardour. The arrangements of Trachenberg had been executed to the letter: gradually and skilfully contracting the circle within which the enemy's movements were circumscribed, they were at length preparing to meet at the appointed rendezvous, in the centre of his camp.[1]

[1] Die Grosse Chron. i. 919. Plotho, ii. 416, 417. Better, i. 189. Bout. 143, 144. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 148, 149. Kriegs Bibliothek, ii. 460.

66. Napoleon's last interview with the King of Saxony, and his departure from Leipsic.

Before the assault commenced, a deputation from the magistrates of Leipsic waited on the Emperor Alexander, beseeching him to spare the city the horrors with which it was menaced if it were carried by open force; and, at the same time, a flag of truce arrived from Macdonald, offering to surrender all that remained of the Saxon troops, with the town, if the French garrison were permitted to retire with their artillery unmolested. This

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proposal, which would in effect have secured the retreat of half the French army, was of course rejected, and the troops moved on to the attack. Meanwhile Napoleon, at ten o'clock, went to pay a farewell visit to the King of Saxony. He was received with the accustomed etiquette, and conducted into the apartment of the Queen, where he remained a quarter of an hour, endeavouring to console the aged monarch in his misfortunes: at length, hearing the rattle of musketry on the side both of Taucha and Grimma, he bade him adieu, and, mounting his horse, set off. In the first instance, he directed his course towards the gate of Ranstadt, which leads into the suburb of Lindenau; but when he arrived there, the crowd of horsemen, carriages, and foot-soldiers was so prodigious, that even the authority of the Emperor's attendants could not clear a passage through them, and he was obliged to retrace his steps. He then returned through the centre of the city, issued on the opposite side by the gate of St Peter, where the bullets were already falling around him, rode round the boulevards, and again reached Ranstadt, by making the entire circuit of the walls. There, however, new dangers awaited him; for the confusion of carriages, artillery, and chariots in the streets of the suburb was such, that to penetrate the mass was impossible; while the rapid approach of the enemy, whose deafening cheers were already heard above the roar of the musketry, rendered the moments precious, and instant escape indispensable. In this extremity, one of the citizens pointed out a lane by which he got into a garden, by the back-door of which he escaped out upon the banks of the Elster, reached the chaussée beyond the suburb, and hastened across the marshes to Lindenau. Had it not been for that casual discovery, he would undoubtedly have been made prisoner.[1]

[1] Die Grosse Chron. i. 917, 918. Odel. ii. 333, Note and 41. Fain, ii. 439, 440. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 149.

Meanwhile the Allied columns were pressing in on all sides; and the tumult in the interior of the city was such, that it was with the utmost difficulty, and only by

67. Leipsic is carried on all sides, after a vigorous resistance.

the most energetic efforts on the part of Poniatowski, Lauriston, and Macdonald, who were charged with the maintenance of the post as long as possible, that any degree of order could be preserved in the defence. Despairing of the possibility of carrying off their innumerable artillery waggons and chariots, the French set fire to three hundred which were in park before the Dresden gate; and the sight of the flames and sound of the explosion, by rendering it certain that the enemy intended to evacuate the place, redoubled the ardour of the Allied troops. The resistance, however, was beyond expectation vigorous. Sacken was twice repulsed from the Halle gate beyond the Partha, and only succeeded at length in forcing his way in by the aid of Langeron's corps, and the sacrifice of almost the whole regiment of Archangel. Still the arch over the Partha and the inner suburb were to be carried; but the Russians crossed the bridge in the face of two heavy guns pouring forth grape-shot, and, rushing down the main street, commenced a murderous warfare with the French, who were firing from the windows and tops of the houses. At the same time an obstinate conflict was going on at the barrier of Hinter-Thor, where Bulow, supported by six Swedish battalions, after a furious conflict, at length forced the gate, and commenced a guerilla warfare with the French at the windows and in the houses. The assailants, however, were now pouring in on all sides, and further resistance was unavailing. Woronzoff, at the head of several Russian battalions, forced the barrier of Grimma; Krasowski stormed that of the Spital; while Benningsen and the advanced guard of the Grand Army carried those of Sand, Windmühlen, and Pegau, looking to the south. On all sides the Allied troops poured like a furious torrent into the city—the very steeples shaking with the tumult—bearing down all opposition, and driving before them an enormous mass of soldiers, carriages, artillery, and waggons,[1] which, with the rearguard everywhere yet

[1] Die Grosse Chron. i. 925, 927. Plotho, ii. 42. Bout. 143, 146. Vaud. i, 221. Jom. iv. 480, 481. Fain, ii. 441.

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bravely fighting, was rolled slowly onwards towards the west, like a huge monster, bleeding at every pore, but still unsubdued.

68. Blowing up of the bridge over the Elster, and surrender of the French rearguard.

At this dreadful moment the great bridge of Lindenau, the only remaining passage over the Elster, was blown up with a frightful explosion. The corporal charged with the mine which had been run under it by orders of Napoleon, hearing the loud hurrahs on all sides, and seeing some of the enemy's tirailleurs approaching in the gardens of the suburbs on either hand, naturally conceived that the French troops had all passed and the baggage only remained, and that the time was therefore come to fire the train, in order to stop the pursuit of the Allies. He accordingly applied the match; the arch was blown into the air, and the passage stopped; while the only other bridge over the river, hastily and imperfectly constructed, had shortly before sunk under the weight of the crowds who thronged to it. A shriek of horror, more terrible than even the loudest cries of battle, burst from the dense multitude which crowded to the edge of the chasm, when they found the arch destroyed. The ranks immediately broke; the boldest threw themselves into the river, where a few escaped across, but the greater part perished in the deep and muddy channel. Macdonald by great exertions succeeded in reaching the brink, and, plunging in, swam his horse across and escaped. Poniatowski also reached the side, and spurred his horse on; but the gallant charger, exhausted with fatigue, reeled as he strove to mount the opposite bank, and fell back on his noble rider, who perished in the water. Lauriston, Reynier, and twenty other generals, with fifteen thousand soldiers, were made prisoners; besides twenty-three thousand sick and wounded who lay in the hospitals and private houses. Two hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, nine hundred chariots and ammunition waggons, an incalculable quantity of baggage, the King of Saxony, two generals of corps, seven generals of divisions,[1] twelve of

[1] Richter, ii. 323. Bout. 146, 149. Odel. ii. 39, 41. Jom. iv. 479, 481. Fain, ii. 442, 443. Vaud. i. 222. Lond. 174, 175. Plotho, ii. 422. Danilefski, 234.

brigade, and thirty thousand other prisoners, independent of the wounded, constituted the trophies, during the three days, of a battle in which the total loss of the French was upwards of sixty thousand men. The loss of the Allies was also immense; it amounted to eighteen hundred officers, and forty-five thousand private soldiers, killed and wounded, in the three days' combat: a prodigious sacrifice, but one which, great as it was, humanity has no cause to regret, for it delivered Europe from French bondage, and the world from revolutionary aggression.*

69. Entrance of the Allied sovereigns into Leipsic.

At two o'clock the carnage ceased at all points; the rattle of musketry was no longer heard, and a distant roar in all directions alone indicated that the waves of this terrible tempest were gradually sinking to rest. But what pen can paint the scene which the interior of the

* The following is the exact proportion in which the total loss was divided between the different powers whose troops were engaged, and it affords a pretty fair criterion of the degree in which the weight of the contest fell upon them respectively:—

| | Generals. | Officers. | Non-Com. Officers and Privates. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Russians, | 18 | 864 | 21,740 |
| Prussians, | 2 | 520 | 14,950 |
| Austrians, | 1 | 399 | 8,000 |
| Swedes, | | 10 | 300 |
| | 21 | 1793 | 44,990 |
| | | | 1,793 |
| | | | 21 |
| | | | 46,804 |

—Kausler, 952; and *Die Grosse Chronik*, i. 937.

Great part of the French military writers, following the example of Napoleon's official account in the *Moniteur*, have ascribed the catastrophe of the 19th entirely to the accidental blowing up of the bridge by the corporal on guard, before the prescribed time. It is evident, however, that a single bridge could never have permitted so vast a mass as fifteen thousand soldiers, two hundred and fifty guns, and eight hundred chariots, to defile across in less than an hour, especially when the enemy were pressing the rear of the mass vigorously on all sides; and in the confusion of such a multitude of stragglers to get forward, with the musketry and cheers of the victors approaching on all sides, the passage would necessarily be speedily choked. This is, accordingly, admitted by the more judicious of the eye-witnesses in the French ranks:—"Du reste, ceux qui furent coupés seraient de même tombés entre les mains de l'ennemi. Sans cet accident, l'impossibilité de sortir autrement que par *l'étroit passage d'une seule porte, les eût également livrés aux Alliés*, qui avaient toute facilité de passer l'Elster sur d'autres points."—Odeleben, *Témoin Oculaire*, ii. 41.

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city now exhibited? Grouped together in wild confusion, lay piles of the dead and heaps of the dying; overturned artillery caissons, broken guns, pillaged baggage waggons, and dejected prisoners, were to be seen beside the exulting bands of the victors, who in admirable order forced their way through the throng, and, amidst cheers that made the very welkin ring, moved steadily forward towards the principal square of the city. On the side of the suburb of Markrannstadt, in particular, the frightful accumulation of wounded fugitives, and as yet unwounded but captive warriors, recalled the awful scene of the passage of the Beresina. Amidst this unparalleled scene, the Allied sovereigns, at the head of their respective troops, made their entrance into the city. The Emperors of Russia and Austria, with the King of Prussia, surrounded by their illustrious generals and brilliant staffs, came by the barriers on the south, the Prince-Royal of Sweden by those on the east, and all met in the great square. At this heart-stirring sight, the enthusiasm of the people knew no bounds: all felt as if themselves and all dear to them had escaped from death. The city resounded with acclamations; handkerchiefs waved from every window, merry chimes rang from every steeple; while tears, more eloquent than words, rolling over almost every cheek, told that the tyrant was struck down, and Germany delivered.[1]

Oct. 19.

[1] Richter, ii. 323. Plotho, ii. 421. Lond. 173, 174. Lab. i. 413. Die Grosse Chron. i. 932, 934.

# CHAPTER LXXXII.

## DELIVERANCE OF GERMANY.

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1. Commencement of Napoleon's retreat towards the Rhine.

WHILE these scenes, outstripping even the splendour of oriental conception, were passing in the city of Leipsic, the French army, sad, disorganised, and dejected, was wending its way towards Markrannstädt. The Emperor, after passing the last bridge, that of the mill of Lindenau, ascended to the first floor of the windmill to examine the state of the army; but there his exhaustion was such that he fell asleep, and slept profoundly for some time, amidst the distant roar of the cannon at Leipsic, and the din of horsemen, guns, and foot-soldiers, who hurried in a tumultuous torrent past the base of the edifice. Wakened by the explosion of the bridge on the other side of the marshes, he hastily arranged some guns in battery, to guard against an immediate attack; but, finding he was not pursued, and having learned the real nature of the catastrophe, he continued his course more leisurely to Markrannstädt, where the whole Guard had already arrived. There headquarters were established for the night. But it was soon apparent how much the fatigues and calamities they had undergone had weakened the authority of the Emperor, and dissolved the discipline of the army. The troops, with feelings embittered by misfortune, marched in sullen and moody desperation. No cheers were heard on the approach of the Emperor: pillage and rapine were universal: the bonds of discipline, even in the Guard itself,[1]

[1] Fain, ii. 444. Odel. i. 43, 44.

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were relaxed; and the officers appeared to have lost at once the power and the inclination to stop the disorder which generally prevailed.

2. Movements of the Allied troops after the battle.

On the side of the Allies, a very considerable dislocation of the immense force which had combated at Leipsic immediately took place. Bernadotte with the Swedes, and a considerable part of his army, as well as Benningsen's force, moved towards Hamburg, where the presence of Davoust, with a powerful corps, both required observation and promised an important acquisition. Klenau was detached towards Dresden, to aid in the blockade of St-Cyr, who, with thirty-five thousand men, was now altogether cut off, and might be expected speedily to surrender. Blucher, with the corps of Langeron and Sacken, moved after the French on the great road to Mayence, and reached Schkeuditz the same night. York was advanced to Halle, and Giulay with his Austrians marched on Pegau; but the great body of the Allied army, worn out with its toils, remained in the neighbourhood of Leipsic. These movements, and in particular the speedy removal of Bernadotte from the headquarters of the Allied sovereigns to a separate, but yet important command, were recommended not less by their military importance than by political considerations of yet greater weight. The Grand Alliance, though hitherto faithful to itself, and prosperous beyond what the most sanguine could have anticipated, was composed of materials which, when the pressure of common danger was removed, could hardly be expected to draw cordially together. Bernadotte, in particular, could not be an object of very warm interest to the Emperor Francis, by whom his conduct at Vienna, fourteen years before, when ambassador of the Directory, were far from being forgotten;[1] his backwardness, especially in the employment of the Swedish troops, during the whole campaign, was well known at headquarters; and he himself, as he admits, felt that he was in a false position,[2] and that he would be better at a

1 *Ante*, ch. xxv. § 138.
2 Fain, ii. 449, 450. Mém. de Charles Jean, ii. 100. Die Grosse Chron. i. 947, 950.

distance from the scene of French carnage and humiliation.*

3. Funeral of Prince Poniatowski. Oct. 20.

The funeral of Prince Poniatowski terminated the last scene of this bloody drama. Victors and vanquished vied with each other in striving to do honour to the hero, who, faithful to his country and his oaths, exhibited, amidst the general defection of Europe, the glorious example of unconquerable firmness and unshaken fidelity. After bravely combating at the head of his heroic but wasted band of followers, in the suburbs of Leipsic, to retard the advance of the Allies, he was retiring to the banks of the Pleisse, still keeping up a desperate resistance, when an explosion was heard, and the cry arose that the bridge was blown up. "Gentlemen," said he to the officers around him, drawing his sword, "it now behoves us to die with honour." At the head of this gallant band he made his way, though severely wounded, through a column of the Allies which strove to intercept his retreat, and reached the banks of the Pleisse, which he succeeded in passing by dismounting from his horse. Exhausted with fatigue and loss of blood he mounted another, and, seeing no other possibility of escape, plunged into the deep stream of the Elster, and by great exertions reached the other side. In striving, however, to mount the opposite bank, the hind feet of the horse became entangled in the mud; it fell backward, and the exhausted chief sank to rise no more. His funeral was celebrated with extraordinary pomp by the Allied sovereigns, who hastened to do honour to a warrior whose military career had been unsullied, and who, in the last extremity, preferred death to surrender. But a still more touching testimony to his worth was borne by the tears of the Poles, who crowded round his bier,[1] and anxiously strove to touch the pall which

[1] Lab. i. 409, 410. Norvins, Portefeuille de 1813, ii. 420, 421.

* "The Prince-Royal lost no time in quitting Leipsic, and moved in the direction of Hamburg. The fact is, that at Leipsic he was in a false position. The sight of every dead body, of every wounded man, of every French prisoner, awakened in his breast the most cruel feelings."—*Mémoires de* CHARLES JEAN, ii. 100.

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4. March of the French army to Weissenfels. Oct. 20.

covered the remains of the last remnant of their royal line, and the last hope of their national independence.

On the day following his dreadful defeat, Napoleon arrived at Weissenfels. In passing over the plain of Lützen, the soldiers cast a melancholy look on the theatre of their former glory, and many shed tears at the sad reverse of which it exhibited so striking a monument. What had availed them the efforts made, the sacrifices endured, the blood shed, since that heroic combat had been maintained? Where were now the young hearts which then beat high, the glittering hopes that were then formed, the ardent visions which then floated before them "in life's morning march, when their bosoms were young?" Before the blood-stained environs of Kaia and Starsiedel, defiled, in wild confusion, the tumultuous array of a beaten, dejected, and half-famished army: three-fourths of those who there had fought so bravely for the independence of France had since perished, or were now captives; the few that remained, more like a funeral procession than a warlike array, passed on pensive and silent; they envied the lot of those who had fallen, for they would not witness the degradation of France.

> "The boast of chivalry, the pomp of power,
> And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
> Await alike the inevitable hour—
> The paths of glory lead but to the grave!"

The Old Guard halted at Rippach, near the spot where Bessières had been slain the day before the battle of Lützen; and there Napoleon experienced a momentary gratification in seeing a column of five thousand Austrian prisoners, with all the standards taken at Dresden, defile before him.[1]

[1] Odel. ii. 44, 47. Fain, ii. 452. Bout. 149, 150.

But this enjoyment was of short duration. As the corps and regiments, in utter disorder and for the most part mingled together, crowded past, it became painfully evident that all the Germans had left their colours; several even of the Polish regiments had passed over to

the enemy ; of Poniatowski's followers, none but six hundred foot-soldiers and fifteen hundred horsemen remained, and they had engaged to abide by the Emperor's standards only for eight days more. Already the Allies were pressing the rear of the army. Sacken's cavalry, under Wassilchikoff, had made two thousand prisoners : and the great road being cut off by Giulay, who from Pegau had moved on Naumburg, it became necessary to throw bridges over the Saale, in order to gain, by a cross march, the other highway at Freiburg. Such was the emotion of Bertrand, who received the Emperor at Weissenfels, and there first became acquainted, from the confusion of the columns, with the magnitude of the disaster that had been sustained, that he shed tears, and openly besought him to hasten forward, even if it were alone, to Erfurth and Mayence, and preserve in his person the fortunes of France.[1]

5. Great defection that appears in the ranks of his Allies in Napoleon's army.

[1] Fain. ii. 452, 453. Bout. 150. Odel. ii. 44, 47. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 152.

On the day following, the retreat was continued in the direction of Freiburg ; but as they could not reach that place, the Emperor passed the night in a cabin on the road-side, only nine feet square. Blucher and Sacken, continuing the pursuit, arrived the same day at Weissenfels, and immediately set about the construction of new bridges in lieu of the wooden ones over which the French had passed, which had been destroyed. Burning with anxiety to overtake the enemy, the Prussian hussars pushed on the moment the passage was practicable, and came up with them at the passage of the Unstrut at Freiburg, where, after a sharp conflict, the rearguard was overthrown, with the loss of a thousand prisoners, eighteen guns, and an immense quantity of ammunition and baggage. On the same day, Giulay had a more serious affair with the enemy at the defile of Kösen. That position, which is extremely strong towards Naumburg, offers scarcely any obstacles to an enemy advancing from the left of the Saale. Bertrand, accordingly, without difficulty dislodged the enemy from it ; and once master

6. Pursuit of the Allies to Freiburg.

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of the defile, its strength in the other direction enabled him easily to maintain himself in it against the repeated attacks of the Austrian corps. The passage of the Unstrut at Freiburg, however, evinced in striking colours the disorganised state of the army. Such was the accumulation of cannon and chariots on the opposite hill, that Napoleon's carriages were unable to get through, and he himself was obliged to alight, and make his way on foot, which he did with extreme difficulty, through the throng. When the enemy's guns began to play on the dense mass, the most frightful disorder ensued; every one rushed headlong towards the bridges, and the bullets began to whistle over the head of Napoleon himself. Finding that he could no longer be of any service, he calmly turned aside the favourite bay horse which he had mounted, and, penetrating through several narrow and difficult defiles, reached Eckartsberg, the scene of Davoust's triumph at the battle of Auerstadt some years before, where he passed the night in the same house from whence, six months before, he had set out, full of hope, to try his fortune at the head of a brilliant host on the Saxon plains. Through the whole night, the army, like a furious torrent, never ceased to roll along in wild confusion, and with dissonant cries, under the windows of the apartment in which the Emperor slept, where all was still and mournful as the grave.[1]

[1] Plotho, ii. 427, 432. Die Grosse Chron. i. 950, 952. Fain, ii. 457, 458. Odel. ii. 50, 55. Vaud. i. 22, 24.

7. Napoleon arrives at Erfurth, where Murat leaves him.

During these days, the greater part of the Allied army marched by the main road through Naumburg and Jena; and, passing Weimar, took post on the road to Erfurth, near Nohra, while the army of the Prince-Royal continued its march by Merseburg, in the direction of Cassel. In this way, the latter repeated exactly the pursuit of the Grand Army by Kutusoff, on the parallel line of march from Malo-jaroslawitz to Krasnoi; and, contenting themselves with harassing the rear of the French army by the army of Silesia, compelled them, by this able disposition, to recoil on the wasted line of their

former advance. On the 22d, the French retreated with such expedition over the great plains which stretched from the neighbourhood of Eckartsberg to Erfurth, that even the Cossacks were unable to overtake them ; and on the following day they reached the latter town, where fortified citadels gave a feeling of security to the army, while the distribution of provisions from extensive magazines assuaged the pangs of hunger which were now so severely felt. Murat there quitted Napoleon, and bent his course towards his own dominions. The pretext assigned for this departure was threatened disturbances in his kingdom, and the necessity of providing for its defence amid the dangers with which Italy would soon be menaced. But though these reasons were plausible, and not altogether without foundation, his real motives were very different. A secret correspondence had commenced with Metternich : and the king of Naples, in the hope of preserving his crown in the general wreck, was preparing to abandon his brother-in-law and benefactor. Napoleon, who, ever since his desertion of his post on the Vistula in the preceding spring, had watched his proceedings with a jealous eye, had no difficulty in divining his real motives. But he dissembled these feelings, and embraced his old companion in arms, as he parted with him, with a melancholy presentiment, which was too fatally realised, that he would never see him again. His last words to him were, " Remember always that you are a French prince."[1]

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Oct. 23.

[1] Die Grosse Chron. i. 967, 970. Fain, ii. 470, 471. Jom. iv. 484. 485. Plotho, ii. 432. Bign. xii. 417.

Napoleon passed two days at Erfurth, entirely engrossed in the labours of the cabinet. There he composed and sent off his famous bulletin, giving the account of the battle of Leipsic ; from the place, and the very hotel where, five years before, during the conferences with the Emperor Alexander, his fortunes had attained their highest elevation,[2] he now was doomed to date the narrative of his decisive overthrow. These two days' rest had a surprising effect in restoring the spirit and

8. Stay of the French army at Erfurth, Oct. 23 and 24.

[2] *Ante*, ch. lv. § 5.

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rectifying the disorders of the army; and then might be seen the clearest proof how much the rapid diminution which, since hostilities recommenced, the French army had undergone, had been owing to the almost total want of magazines of provisions for their subsistence, and the consequent necessity of individual pillage: all the effects of the atrocious revolutionary maxim, that war should maintain war. So indignant was the Emperor at this result of physical privations, which he never felt himself, that on witnessing the effect of the magazines of Erfurth in restoring order, he said to the officers around, "Now, only see what a set they are; they are going to the devil. I shall lose eighty thousand men from this to the Rhine in this manner." But even in this moment, when his beaten and dissolving army was only held together by the temporary supply of the magazines which they passed on their march, he was dreaming of fresh projects of conquest, and said repeatedly, "From hence to the Rhine; in spring I shall have two hundred and fifty thousand combatants." He was perfectly calm and collected in his manner, however; firm and unshaken in his views; and heard with equanimity all that was addressed to him, even on the necessity of making peace with the Allies; the subject of all others the most repugnant to his secret thoughts.[1]

[1] Odel. ii. 57, 58. Fain, ii. 465, 466.

9. Reorganisation of the French army.

The army underwent a great change of composition during its brief sojourn at Erfurth, eminently descriptive of the awful catastrophes which had recently thinned its ranks. All that remained were formed into six corps,* the sad remains of thirteen which, when the armistice terminated, followed the standards of the Emperor. Three whole corps, viz. those of Lauriston, Reynier, and Poniatowski, had disappeared during the catastrophe of Leipsic, and were never heard of again in the French army. Oudinot's had been dissolved after the disaster

* Commanded by Victor, Ney, Bertrand, Marmont, Augereau, and Macdonald.

of Dennewitz; two, St-Cyr's and Vandamme's, had been left in Dresden; Davoust was in Hamburg, with detachments in Torgau and Magdeburg, and Rapp still held the ramparts of Dantzic. Above a hundred and ten thousand men were left to their fate in the garrisons on the Elbe; in Magdeburg alone there were thirty thousand; in Hamburg twenty-five; in Dresden thirty-five; in Torgau fourteen thousand. The garrisons of these places had been swelled to these enormous amounts by the multitude of stragglers, sick and wounded men, who sought a refuge within their walls after the retreat of the Grand Army from the Elbe. But they proved rather a burden than an advantage to their garrisons, for they brought with them physical contagion and mental depression, from the miseries and privations of the campaign, and augmented the number of mouths, which pressed upon the now straitened supplies of provisions. The whole force which the Emperor brought with him from Erfurth towards the Rhine was under ninety thousand men; while twice that number were left blockaded in the fortresses on the Elbe, the Oder, and the Vistula; a most extraordinary and unparalleled result of the campaign, and saying little for the general plan of operations which he had adopted.[1]

[1] Fain, ii. 466, 407. Vaud. i. 225.

10. Continued retreat of the French, and pursuit of the Allies.

The stay of the Emperor at Erfurth, short as it was, filled the citizens, most of whom had been reduced to destitution by the continued exactions of the French army, with the utmost anxiety; for they were afraid that, to complete their miseries, they were to be involved in the horrors of a siege. It was necessity, however, from the dilapidated state of the artillery, and the disorganised condition of his troops, which alone dictated this stoppage; and no sooner were the guns and caissons replenished from the magazines of Erfurth, and the troops partially fed and arranged in different corps, than the army resumed its march for the Rhine, and on the same day reached Gotha. Blucher, with unwearied activity,

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followed on its traces, and not only collected all the abandoned guns and captured the stragglers, but attacked and defeated the rearguard near that town, with the loss of two thousand prisoners. The grand Allied army, with the headquarters of the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia, followed through the Thuringian forest; but so rapid was the retreat of the French towards the Rhine, that they were unable to keep pace with them, and beyond that woody region the task of pursuing the retiring columns was devolved on the Cossacks.[1]

[1] Lab. i. 415. Chute de l'Emp. de Napoleon. Fain, ii. 472. Bout. 154. Plotho, ii. 446. Die Grosse Chron. i. 973, 974.

11. Dreadful sufferings of the French army from famine and fatigue.

These formidable light troops, however, under their renowned leaders, Platoff, Orloff Denisoff, Chernicheff, and Kowaiski, continued the pursuit with indefatigable perseverance. Not only were all foraging parties on either side of the road cut off, but the whole stragglers were made prisoners, and a vast quantity of abandoned guns and ammunition was collected at every step. The certainty of being made prisoners had no effect in deterring a large part of the army from straggling. Such were the pangs they underwent from hunger, that they were often glad of a pretence for yielding themselves to the enemy for the sake of momentary relief; and the woods, for some leagues, were filled with isolated men, great part of whom sank, from pure exhaustion, into the arms of death. With the exception of the frost and snow, the retiring army presented the same appearances as in the Russian retreat. Desertion prevailed to a frightful extent, especially among the few troops of the Rhenish Confederacy which still adhered to the fortunes of Napoleon; the road was strewn, the ditches on either side filled, with the dead bodies of men and horses who had dropped down from the effects of fatigue and famine; and so rapid was the process of dissolution in the whole army, that it was hard to say, in the last days of the retreat, whether it was not melting away as fast as the host which retreated from Moscow had done under the severity of the Russian winter.[2]

[2] Vict. et Conq. xxii. 153. Bout. 154, 155. Fain, ii. 472, 473. Lab. i. 415, 416. Better, i. 205, 208. Plotho, ii. 442.

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While Napoleon, however, was thus making by rapid strides for the Rhine, a new and unexpected enemy was arising in that quarter, who threatened to intercept his retreat, and renew on the banks of the Main the horrors of the Beresina. Bavaria, though the last to join the alliance, had taken the most decisive steps to demonstrate her sincerity in the cause which she had newly espoused. No sooner were the cabinet of Munich relieved, by the march of Augereau for Leipsic, of the apprehensions excited by the presence of his corps near their frontier at Würtzburg, than they yielded, as already mentioned, to the solicitations of the Allies, and concluded a peace with the cabinet of Vienna on the 8th October, in virtue of which Bavaria acceded to the Grand Alliance. Military operations of the highest importance immediately followed this diplomatic conversion. The Bavarian army, under Marshal Wrede, which was stationed at Braunau, opposite to the Austrian corps under the Prince of Reuss, joined itself to the latter force, and both united set out in the middle of October in the direction of Frankfort on the Main, under the command of Wrede. The whole consisted of three divisions of Bavarian infantry, with two brigades of cavalry of that state, and two divisions of Austrian infantry and one of cavalry; and numbered fifty-six thousand combatants, with one hundred and sixteen guns. On the 19th they passed the Danube at Dönauwerth, and Wrede marched with such expedition, that on the 27th headquarters were at Aschaffenburg, from whence he detached ten thousand men to Frankfort; and on the 29th he took post in the forest of HANAU, stationing his troops across the great road, and blocking up entirely the retreat of the French army to Mayence.[1]

12. March of Wrede and the Bavarians to the Rhine.

Oct. 15.

[1] Jom. iv. 437. Bout. 154, 155. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 153. Die Grosse Chron. i. 983, 989. Plotho, ii. 448, 452.

The forces which Napoleon brought back with him were much more considerable in point of numerical amount; but a large party of them were so completely disorganised and depressed by the privations they had

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13. Forces with which Napoleon advanced against him.

undergone during their retreat, that the contest between the two armies could not be said to be unequal. Nearly ninety thousand men had set out around his standards from Erfurth; but ten thousand had strayed from their colours, or been made prisoners in the subsequent forced marches; and when the army approached the Main, it did not number above eighty thousand men. Fully thirty thousand of these, also, were either stragglers, or so far in the rear as to be of no value in the shock which was approaching; so that, to clear his passage, Napoleon could not rely upon more than fifty thousand men; and his once magnificent artillery of eight hundred pieces was reduced to two hundred guns. They were, for the most part, however, the artillery of the Guard, second to none in Europe for vigour and efficiency; and the troops, aware of their danger, ardently desirous to get back to France, and perfectly sensible that no other way remained but what they could win at their swords' point, might be expected to fight with the courage of despair. The Guards, moreover, upon whom the weight of the contest was likely to fall, had suffered comparatively little in the late disasters; and Bertrand's corps had been an entire stranger to the losses of the last two days' combat at Leipsic. The Emperor, therefore, who had slept on the 29th at Langenselbold, the chateau of the Prince of Isemberg, no sooner heard that the road to Mayence was blocked up by the Bavarian troops, than he made his dispositions for an attack.[1]

[1] Fain, ii. 472, 473. Jom. ii. 487, 488. Bout. 157, 158. Vaud. i. 227, 228.

14. Description of the field of battle at Hanau.

Atlas, Plate 90.

Wrede, who had driven the garrison of Würtzburg into the citadel, and so secured the passage of that important post on the 27th, reached Hanau with his advanced guard on the 28th, and on the day following brought up the bulk of his forces to that town, and, stretching his line across the high road leading to Frankfort and Mayence, entirely stopped the way. His advanced guard soon came into communication with the Cossacks of Chernicheff and Orloff Denisoff, the vanguard of the Allied

grand army which hovered round the outskirts of the French host. No sooner was the junction formed, than the Bavarian general arranged his troops in order of battle; and the position which they occupied was so peculiar, as to be entirely different from any which had formed the theatre of combat since the commencement of the revolutionary war. The Allied army stood in front of Hanau, at the point where the great road from Erfurth to Frankfort emerges from a thick forest, five miles broad, through which it passes into the open plain,—the right wing resting on the Kinzig, the left being in echelon on the great road. Sixty pieces of cannon were planted in the centre between the Lamboi bridge, over the Kinzig, and the great road, to play on the advancing columns of the enemy when they attempted to debouch from the forest. The vanguard was posted at Ruckingen, with orders to retire from that post as soon as it was seriously attacked, and fall back to the main body of the army, which was drawn up across the great road in the plain which lies between the town of Hanau and the forest of Lamboi. A large body of light troops occupied the forest to retard the advance of the enemy. That great tract of wood extends for above two leagues in breadth towards Erfurth, and is composed of old oaks, many of them as large as those in Windsor Forest, whose aged stems at times rise out of close thickets of underwood, at others, overshadow with their spreading boughs beautiful vistas of green sward, where numerous herds of swine feed on the acorns; realising thus, in the days of Napoleon, that scene of primitive nature in northern Europe, in the time of Richard Cœur-de-Lion, over which modern genius has thrown so enchanting a light.[1]*

[1] Personal observation. Bout. 157. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 155. Fain, ii. 475.

The position which the Allied army thus occupied, resembled, in a military point of view, that held by Moreau at the western side of the forest of Hohen-

* The opening forest-scene in *Ivanhoe*.

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15. Advantage and weakness of Wrede's position there.

linden; and if Wrede had been in sufficient strength to keep his ground in front of the issues from the wood, and hinder the enemy from deploying, at the same time that a division was thrown across the thickets, on the flank of the advancing columns, as that of Richepanse was at Hohenlinden, he might possibly have realised the brilliant success of the great republican general on that memorable spot.[1] But his army was not sufficient in strength to effect such an object. It originally consisted of twenty-three thousand six hundred Austrians, and thirty-one thousand two hundred Bavarians, in all fifty-four thousand eight hundred. But after deducting three battalions left to blockade the citadel of Würtzburg, and ten thousand imprudently detached to Frankfort, he could not bring forty-five thousand men into the field; and, with such a force, it was impossible to expect that the retreat of eighty thousand combatants, with two hundred pieces of cannon, fighting with the courage of despair, could be arrested, the more especially when the head of the columns was composed of the Old and Young Guard. Nor was the position of the Allies exempt from peril; for, if they were defeated, and the French army was in a condition to follow up its successes, they ran the risk of being thrown back upon the Main, and destroyed by superior forces, in attempting to make their way across that broad and deep river.[2]

[1] *Ante*, ch. xxxii. § 29.

[2] Volderndorf, iv. 268, 269. Die Grosse Chron. i. 1001, 1004. Jom. iv. 487, 488. Bout. 157. Vaud. i. 229, 236. Wrede's Official Account, Schoell, iii. 388. Bign. xii. 381.

16. Commencement of the action, and obstinate struggle in the wood. Oct. 30.

At eleven o'clock on the forenoon of the 30th the battle commenced. The French columns, preceded by a cloud of tirailleurs, advanced in dense masses through the wood, the artillery following the great road, the light troops spread out in the thickets and greensward on either side; and soon a warm fire began among the trees. The dark recesses of the wood were illuminated by the frequent flashes of the musketry: the verdant alleys were hastily traversed by files of armed men, and the action began like a magnificent hunting party in the forest of Fontainebleau. Victor's and Macdonald's corps,

now reduced to five thousand combatants, headed the advance, and with some difficulty made their way, fighting as they penetrated through the wood, to the plain beyond it; but when they came there and endeavoured to deploy on its south-western skirts, they were crushed by the concentric fire of seventy pieces of cannon, which stood before the Allied line. For four hours the French army was unable to clear its way through the narrow plain which lay between the forest and the banks of the Kinzig. During this period, however, the Guards and main body of the army had time to come up; and Napoleon, now seriously disquieted for his line of retreat, immediately ordered a general attack on the enemy. General Curial, with two battalions of the Old Guard, dispersed as tirailleurs, were brought forward to the front, and began to engage the Bavarian sharpshooters. The hardy veterans soon gained ground, and won not only the issues of the forest, but part of the little plain sprinkled with oaks which lay beyond; and to the space thus won, the artillery of the Guard, under Drouot, was immediately brought forward.[1]

[1] Fain, ii. 477. Wrede's Official Account, Schoell, iii. 389. Bout. 158. Plotho, ii. 456. Die Grosse Chron. i. 1007, 1009.

17. The passage is forced by the artillery and cavalry of the Guard.

This admirable officer commenced his fire with fifteen guns; but they were gradually augmented, as others came up, to fifty, and soon acquired a decided superiority over the batteries of the enemy, whose artillery, though more numerous, returned the fire feebly, from an apprehension of exhausting their ammunition, the reserves of which had not yet come up from Aschaffenburg. Under cover of Drouot's terrible fire, Nansouty and Sebastiani debouched with the cavalry of the Guard, which had suffered less than any other part of the army in the preceding actions, and by a vigorous charge overthrew everything that was opposed to them. Wrede, seeing his danger, collected his cavalry, and the Bavarian horse and squares endeavoured to rally behind Chernicheff's Cossacks;[2] but although the Russian dragoons combated bravely, they were unable to withstand the thundering

[2] Vict. et Conq. xxii. 156, 157. Bout. 158, 159. Fain, ii. 477, 479. Wrede's Official Report, Schoell, iii. 389. Plotho, ii. 453. Voldern-dorf, iv. 275. Die Grosse Chron. i. 1017, 1018.

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charges of the French cuirassiers, and the point-blank fire of the artillery of the Guard. Ere long the whole left wing of the Allies gave way and fled towards the Kinzig, leaving the plain between the river and the wood, and the road to Frankfort, open to the enemy. As a last resource, the Bavarian general made an effort with the whole resources he could collect; but Napoleon quickly pushed forward two battalions of the Old Guard, who arrested his advance; and Wrede, despairing of success, withdrew the shattered remains of his army behind the Kinzig, under protection of the cannon of Hanau.

18. Position and danger of Napoleon during the action.

While this vehement conflict was going on at the entrance of the wood, Napoleon himself, in the depths of the forest, was a prey to the most anxious solicitude. Fresh troops were continually coming up from the rear; but the highway and alleys through the forest were already blocked up with carriages and cannon; and the increasing multitude, when no issue could be obtained, only augmented the confusion and embarrassment in its wooded recesses. The Emperor, unquiet and anxious, was meanwhile walking backwards and forwards on the highway, near the bend which the road makes, conversing with Caulaincourt. A bomb fell near them in a ditch bordering the highway: the latter immediately placed himself between the Emperor and the danger, and they continued their conversation as if nothing had occurred. The attendants of Napoleon hardly ventured to draw their breath; but the bomb had sunk so deep in the ditch, that it was prevented from bursting. Meanwhile the forest on all sides resounded with the echoes of artillery. The eye sought in vain to measure its depths, even with the aid of the bright flashes which illuminated their gloom; the crash of the cannon-balls was heard with frightful violence on the gnarled branches of the oaks; and not a few of the French were killed by the fall of the huge arms which had been torn from the sides

of these venerable patriarchs of the forest by the violent strokes. When Wrede's last and desperate onset was made on the French left, in particular, the combatants approached so near that their cries were distinctly heard, and the tops of the trees were violently agitated, as in a hurricane, by the bullets which whistled through their branches. The repulse of that attack by the infantry of the Old Guard removed, indeed, the danger, and opened the road to Frankfort; but the Emperor, notwithstanding, did not march on with the advanced guard, but spent the night in the forest, beside a blazing watchfire under the oaks, where next morning he received a deputation from the magistrates of Hanau, who came to beseech him to spare their city the horrors of an assault.[1] *

[1] Fain, ii. 478, 479. Norvins, Portefeuille de 1813, ii. 431.

19. Capture of Hanau by the French on the 31st.

During the night after the battle, the French army defiled without intermission on the great road by Wilhelmstadt, from whence it moved by Höchstadt on Frankfort. But though the Guards and principal part of the army were thus placed beyond the reach of danger, it was not so easy a matter to say how the rearguard, and the numerous stragglers who followed its columns, were to be brought through the perilous pass between the forest and the river. Late on the evening of the 30th, the rearguard, under Mortier, was still at Glenhausen, on the other side of the forest; and, in order to protect his retreat, Marmont was left before Hanau, with a consi-

* The field of battle at Hanau is one of the most interesting of the many spots on the continent of Europe to which the exploits of Napoleon have given durable celebrity, as well from the circumstance of its having been the theatre of the last of his German conflicts, as from the extraordinary and romantic character of the old forest where the severest part of the action took place. When the author visited this spot, in 1816, the marks of the then recent conflict were everywhere conspicuous on the huge trunks and gnarled branches of the oaks, many of which were cleft asunder or torn off their stems by the cannon-shot; while the naturally picturesque appearance of the decaying masses was singularly increased by the cavities made by the howitzers and balls, which were in many cases sunk into the wood, and the ruined aspect of the broken branches, half overgrown with underwood, which encumbered its grassy glades.

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derable part of the army. At two in the morning of the 31st he began to bombard the town, and with such effect, that it was evacuated early in the forenoon by the Austrian garrison, and immediately taken possession of by the French forces. No sooner was this *point d'appui* secured on the other side of the Kinzig, than Marmont attacked the right of the Allies posted behind the road to Aschaffenburg, and with such impetuosity, that it was forced to give way, and thrown back in disorder on the Main, where it must inevitably have been destroyed, if the Guards and cuirassiers of the French army had been at hand to support the advantage.[1]

Oct. 31.

[1] Wrede's Official Account, Schoell, iii. 391. Vaud. 252. Bout. 161. Plotho, ii. 459. Grosse Chron. i. 1023, 1024.

20. Its recapture by Wrede, and retreat of the French to Frankfort.

They had, however, meanwhile passed on towards Frankfort; and Marmont, in consequence, solicitous only to secure the passage of the rearguard of Mortier, paused in the career of success, and at two in the afternoon fell back towards Hanau, followed by Wrede, who, stung to the quick by the disaster he had experienced, himself led on his forces, and stormed that town at the head of his troops. In pursuing, however, the Italian rearguard towards the Kinzig, he received a severe wound, which obliged him to relinquish the command. At the same time, another column of the Allies drove the French over the bridge of Lamboi; but, pursuing their advantage too warmly in the plain in front of the forest, they were attacked in flank by a French column issuing from the woods, and driven back with great loss. These checks, and the wound of Wrede, rendered General Tresnel, who succeeded him in the command, more circumspect. Relinquishing, therefore, all hope of inflicting further injury on the retreating army, he withdrew his troops behind the Kinzig, and Marmont continued his retreat to Frankfort, where the same night he was joined by Mortier with the rearguard. That marshal having heard an exaggerated account of the losses of the army on the day before, had, by marching all the preceding night by Langenselbold, succeeded by a circuitous route in avoid-

ing the scene of danger. Napoleon was, with reason, to the last degree indignant at the defection of Bavaria, which had brought him to such straits, and he expressed this soon after at the Tuileries, in no measured terms, to M. d'Argenteau. "The King of Bavaria," said he, "has been guilty of a base treachery. He wished to gain possession of the keys of France for my enemies. What need had Bavaria of the keys of France? It is the kick of the ass's foot: but let him beware; the lion is not dead. I have just returned from killing Wrede and passing over the Bavarian army. The King of Bavaria shall see me again next year, and he will not soon forget it. He was a little prince whom I made great: he is a great prince whom I shall make little."[1]*

[1] Die Grosse Chron. i. 1026, 1027. Plotho, ii. 462. Bout. 161, 162. Fain, ii. 480, 481. Vaud. 252, 253. Wrede's Official Account, Schoell, iii. 390, 391. Bign. 423.

21. Results of the battle, and passage of the Rhine by the French.

The battle of Hanau cost the Allies ten thousand men, of whom four thousand were prisoners; and the French lost seven thousand, of whom three thousand were wounded and left in the forest, from want of carriages to convey them away. The road to Frankfort from the field of battle resembled an immense wreck, being strewn with ammunition-waggons, broken-down guns, dead horses, and wounded men, who were abandoned in the precipitate retreat of the French army. Napoleon left that city on the 1st November: soon the red domes and steeples of Mayence appeared in view; the army defiled in mournful silence over the long bridge which it had so often passed in the pride of anticipated victory. The Emperor remained six days in that stronghold, to collect the ruined remains of his vast army, and then set out for Paris, where he arrived on the 9th. Meanwhile the French eagles bade A FINAL ADIEU TO THE GERMAN PLAINS, the theatre of their glories, of their crimes, and of their punishment.[2]

[2] Fain, ii. 480, 481. Bout. 164. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 160, 161. Plotho, ii. 462, 463. Die Grosse Chron. i. 1027, note.

The battle of Hanau was a dignified termination to the exploits of the French revolutionary army beyond

* The authenticity of this remarkable speech is placed beyond a doubt by many concurring witnesses.—See MEREY D'ARGENTEAU, *Notice Historique*, 48, 49; and BIGNON, xii. 423.

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22. Reflections on the battle.

the Rhine, and threw a parting ray of glory over their long and successful career. Its lustre belongs in an especial manner to the Imperial Guard, by whom the victory was almost exclusively gained; and certainly no troops could, under circumstances of greater difficulty and depression, have achieved a more glorious triumph. When we reflect that the soldiers who, after sharing in the dangers, and witnessing the disasters, of the greatest battle recorded in history, were obliged to toil for above two hundred miles through a wearisome and disastrous retreat, suddenly found themselves, at its close, assailed by a fresh army, superior to that which at the moment they could array against it, and which entirely blocked up their only line of retreat—we must admit that, equally with the discipline and resolution of the Guard during the Russian retreat, their victory on this occasion demonstrates the unconquerable firmness of those iron bands, whom the training and victories of Napoleon had nursed up to be at once the glory, the terror, and the scourge of Europe.

23. Light it throws on previous operations in the war, [1] *Ante*, ch. lxxiii. § 68.

It throws a clear and important light upon the wisdom of Kutusoff in not attempting to stop the Imperial Guard at Krasnoi,[1] and contenting himself with the lesser but safer advantage of passing the succeeding columns under the edge of the sword; and on the injustice of the clamour which has been raised against Tchichagoff, because with less than thirty thousand men, and a hundred and fifty guns, he did not succeed in stopping Napoleon at the Beresina, who had forty thousand efficient combatants, independent of as many stragglers, and two hundred and fifty guns, at his disposal.[2] In truth, the success of the French at the Beresina, of the Russians at Culm, of the English at Corunna, and of Napoleon at Hanau, demonstrates the truth of the old adage, that it is in general well to make a bridge of gold for a flying enemy. Nothing is often more fallacious, in such a case, than to judge of the prostration of the strength of an army by the number of its stragglers, the disorder of its columns, the wreck of

[2] *Ante*, ch. lxxiii. § 86.

guns and ammunition-waggons which marks its course, or the languor with which it resists when attacked by the *pursuing* enemy. All these are the beginning of ruin, but they are not ruin itself; as much as it is weakened *in rear* in conflict with the pursuing enemy, is it strengthened in front by the multitudes constantly increasing who successively come up. If their retreat is threatened, and the necessity of opening a passage at the sword's point becomes evident to every capacity, it is surprising how soon order will be resumed under the pressure of impending danger, and a desperate valour will compensate the loss of the largest amount of material resources.

24. Combat of Hochheim, and approach of the Allied armies to the Rhine. Nov. 4.

While the sad remains of the French army were retiring across the Rhine, the Allied troops followed closely on their footsteps; and the forces of central and eastern Europe poured in prodigious strength down the valley of the Main. On the 4th November the advanced guards, under Prince Schwartzenberg, entered Frankfort; and on the same day the headquarters of the Allied sovereigns reached Aschaffenburg. On the day following, Alexander made his entry into Frankfort at the head of twenty thousand horse, amidst the universal transports of the inhabitants; and the Imperial headquarters were fixed there, till preparations could be made for the arduous undertaking of crossing the Rhine, and carrying the war into the heart of France. At the same time, their forces on all sides rapidly approached that frontier stream. Schwartzenberg forced the passage of the Nidda, and advanced to Hochst, within two leagues of Mayence; while Blucher, on his right, approached the Rhine, and fixed his headquarters at Giessen. A few days after, Giulay received instructions to attack Hochheim, a small town fortified with five redoubts, which stands a little in advance of the *tête-de-pont* of Mayence at Cassel, and was garrisoned by six thousand men, under Guilleminot, supported by Morand with an equal force.[1] So formidable, however, were the columns which the Allies had destined

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Nov. 9.

[1] Die Grosse Chron. i. 1033, 1068. Voldern-dorf, iv. 288, 290. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 161. Bout. 165, 166.

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for its assault—consisting of Giulay's column, which attacked the town itself, while Prince Alois of Lichtenstein turned its right, and threatened its communication with the Rhine—that the place was speedily carried, and the French were driven, with the loss of three hundred prisoners, into the *tête-de-pont* of Cassel, the last fortified post in that quarter which they possessed on the right bank of the Rhine.

25. Winter-quarters of both parties.

This combat was the last of the campaign, so far as the grand armies on either side were concerned. Exhausted with a contest of such unexampled fatigue and vehemence, both commanders put their forces into winter-quarters. Those of Napoleon, entirely on the left bank of the Rhine, extended from Cologne on the north, to Strassburg on the south; but the bulk of his forces were stationed at Mayence, Coblentz, and opposite to the centre of the Allied forces around Frankfort. Their appearance on crossing the bridge of Mayence, so often the scene of their triumphant entry into Germany, was melancholy in the extreme. During two days that the passage lasted, the bridge and the town, says an eye-witness, resembled less the headquarters of an enemy than a field of battle, from which the dead had not yet been removed. No sooner had they reached the streets, than the soldiers fell down in multitudes from inanition or fatigue. Soon a frightful typhus fever broke out in their attenuated ranks. The presence and activity of Napoleon alone alleviated these accumulated evils, and provided hospitals and resources for the suffering multitude. The grand Allied army, including both that of Blucher and of Schwartzenberg, extended along the course of the Rhine, from Kehl to Coblentz: the army of Silesia, forming the right, being opposite to Coblentz, and spreading up the hilly part of the Rhine to Ehrenbreitstein; that of Bohemia spreading from the Main to the Neckar, and thence to the borders of the Black Forest.[1]

[1] Die Grosse Chron. i. 1069, 1074. Vaud. i. 237. Bout. 167. Bign. xii. 421, 422.

The Germans have long connected heart-stirring asso-

ciations with the sight, and even the name of the Rhine. The vast amphitheatre of the central Alps, from the snows of which that noble stream takes its rise; the sublime cataract by which it descends into the plains of Germany; the ancient and peopled cities which lie along its banks; the romantic regions through whose precipices it afterwards flows; the feudal remains by which their summits are crowned; the interesting legends of the olden time with which they are connected; the vineyards which nestle in their sunny nooks; the topaz-blaze of the cliffs on which the mouldering ruins are placed—have long sunk into the heart of that imaginative people, and, united to the thrilling music of Haydn, have touched the inmost chords of the German soul.* They connected it, in an especial manner, with the idea of Germany *as a whole.* It was their great frontier stream; it recalled the days of their emperors and independence; it had become, as it were, the emblem of the Fatherland. It may easily be conceived what effect upon the armies of a people thus excited—whose hearts had thrilled to the songs of Körner, whose swords had drunk of the blood of Leipsic — the sight of the Rhine produced, when it first burst upon their united and conquering arms. Involuntarily the columns halted when they reached the heights beyond Hochheim, where its windings spread out as on a map beneath their feet; the rear ranks hurried to the front; the troops uncovered as they beheld the stream of their fathers; tears trickled down many cheeks; joy, too big for utterance, swelled every heart;[1] and the enthusiasm passing from rank to rank, soon a hundred thousand voices joined

26. Enthusiasm of the German troops when they approached the Rhine.

[1] Personal knowledge.

* "The Rhine! the Rhine! be blessings on the Rhine!
St Rochus bless the land of love and wine!
The groves and high-hung meads, whose glories shine
In painted waves below;
Its rocks, whose topaz-beam betrays the vine,
Of richer ruby glow.
The Rhine! the Rhine! be blessings on the Rhine!
Beats there a sad heart here?—pour forth the wine!"

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in the cheers which told the world that the war of independence was ended, AND GERMANY DELIVERED.*

1813. 27. Final overthrow of the kingdom of Westphalia.

Nothing remained but to reap the fruits of this mighty victory,—to gather up the fragments of this prodigious spoil. Yet so wide was it spread, so far had the French empire extended over Europe, that to collect these fruits was a matter of no small time and labour. The giant was thrown down, but it was no easy undertaking to uncase his limbs, and collect his armour. The rickety kingdom of Westphalia was the first of Napoleon's political creations which sank to the dust, never again to rise. Jerome, already almost dethroned by the incursion of Chernicheff, was finally swept away by the arms of Bernadotte. Woronzoff, with the advanced guard of his

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army, entered Cassel nine days after the battle of Leipsic; Jerome had previously abandoned that capital; the greater part of his army joined the Allies, and the few who remained faithful to his cause precipitately retired to Düsseldorf, where he crossed the Rhine. He was closely followed by Winzingerode, who not only soon organised the whole kingdom of Westphalia in the interest of the Allies, but overthrew the revolutionary dynasty in the grand-duchy of Berg, which united its

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arms to the common standards of Germany. The army of the Prince-Royal, united to that of Benningsen, no longer required for the great operations in the field, spread itself over the north of Germany. By Göttingen it marched to Hanover, everywhere re-establishing the authority of the King of England, amidst the unanimous transports of the inhabitants, who chased away their old oppressors, the douaniers, with every mark of ignominy. Bernadotte's headquarters were established in

* The following lines were at this period added to the national anthem, pointing to the anxious desire, generally felt, to reclaim from the spoiler the German provinces on the left bank of the Rhine :—

"The Rhine shall no longer be our boundary—
It is the great artery of the state,
And it shall flow through the heart of our empire."

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that city, while Winzingerode spread over the grand-duchy of Oldenburg, and East Friesland; and Bulow marched to Munster, on his way to Holland, where the people were only waiting for the approach of the Allied standards to throw off the French yoke, and declare their independence. Those Prussian corps, with their shoes and clothing entirely worn out by the protracted and fatiguing campaign they had undergone, were now in no condition to undertake any ulterior operations; but at this juncture a liberal supply of clothing and every necessary arrived from England, which at once restored their former efficiency, and for which they expressed the most unbounded gratitude.[1]

Nov. 12.

1 Plotho, ii. 508, 511. Lond. 200, 202, 205. Bout. 168. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 162.

28. Operations against Davoust on the Lower Elbe.

Atlas, Plate 39.

Davoust, who had been left in Hamburg with twenty-five thousand French, besides ten thousand Danes, presented a more important and difficult object of conquest. Bernadotte wisely determined to unite his forces to those of Walmoden, in order to cut off the retreat, and secure the reduction, of this powerful body of veteran troops; and with this view he broke up from Hanover on the 20th November, and marched by Lüneburg to Boitzenburg on the Elbe, where he arrived four days afterwards; while Woronzoff invested Harburg, and Strogonoff moved against Stade. An attempt to take the latter town by escalade failed; but the French commander, fearing a repetition of the attack, withdrew his forces across the Elbe, and joined the Danes at Gluckstadt. The Prince-Royal, having now collected forty thousand men, prepared a general attack on Davoust, who was in position behind the Steckenitz; but the French marshal, fearful of being cut off from Hamburg, quitted that position during the night, and retired behind the Bille. The effect of this retrograde movement was to separate entirely the French corps from the Danish auxiliaries; and the latter, foreseeing the perilous predicament in which their allies would soon be placed, deemed it most expedient to detach themselves from their fortunes, and accordingly retired to Lübeck.

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Nov. 24.

Nov. 26.

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Thither they were immediately followed by the Allied forces. The Danish commander, finding himself menaced with an assault which he was in no condition to resist, proposed a capitulation, which was accepted, and he was permitted to rejoin the bulk of the Danish forces at Segeberg, while Davoust shut himself up in Hamburg, resolved to defend his post to the last extremity.[1]

[1] Lond. 209, 210. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 163. Bout. 170, 171. Die Grosse Chron. i. 1081, 1089.

29. Concluding operations against the Danes, and armistice with them.

The Danes after this retired towards their own country followed by Walmoden; but seeing that the Allied general had imprudently extended himself too far, they gained an unforeseen advantage over him. Three battalions of Danish infantry, with two regiments of cavalry, and six guns, having been vigorously charged by the Swedish horse, had laid down their arms; but the Swedish com-

Dec. 6. mander having imprudently left only a single squadron of hussars to guard so large a body of prisoners, they rose on their escort, and almost all escaped, leaving the guns alone in the hands of the Swedes. After this event, discreditable to both parties, the one for the surprise, the other for the breach of faith, the Danes retired in a body towards Kiel, pursued by Walmoden, who, in order to cut off their retreat, took post himself at Osterrade with part of his forces, while the remainder pushed on after their line of retreat. The Danes, seeing their pursuers

Dec. 7. thus divided, quickly fell upon the corps at Osterrade with ten thousand men, and defeated it with considerable loss. The torrent of success, however, on the part of the Allies, was too violent to be arrested by such a casual check. Threatened by superior forces, the Danes shut themselves up in Rendsburg; Bernadotte advanced to Kiel; and the Allies spread themselves over the whole of the south of Jutland. Upon this, the Danish commander, seeing it was impossible to keep the field against such superior forces, and that the whole southern provinces of Denmark would speedily be overrun, entered into conferences with the Prince-Royal with a view to an armistice, and the adhesion of Denmark to the Allied

powers. On the 15th December an armistice was accordingly concluded, to endure for fifteen days only; but this led to negotiations with the cabinet of Copenhagen, which terminated in a peace between Denmark and the Allied powers, which was signed on the 14th January and 8th February 1814: the particulars of the treaty will afterwards be given. Meanwhile, the two fortresses of Gluckstadt and Friedrichsort, being excluded from the armistice, were besieged by the Swedish forces; and such activity did the Prince-Royal display in his operations, that the latter of these fortresses was compelled to surrender on the 19th December, with a hundred pieces of cannon and eight hundred prisoners.[1]

[1] Richter, ii. 434, 437. Bout. 173, 174. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 163, 164. See the Treaties in Martens' Sup. v. 673, 681.

30. Operations of St-Cyr and Ostermann before Dresden.

The principal attention of the Allies, however, after the battle of Leipsic, was drawn to the city of Dresden, where St-Cyr, as already noticed,[2] had been left with thirty-five thousand men, when Napoleon set out in the direction of Wittenberg and Berlin. At that period, the only force left to observe the place was Count Ostermann Tolstoy's, whose troops did not exceed twenty thousand men. Profiting by so considerable a superiority, St-Cyr wisely resolved to make a sortie, and throw the enemy back upon the Bohemian frontier. Four divisions accordingly, mustering altogether twenty thousand men, moved on the 17th October against the Russian general, whose forces were for the most part new levies who had never seen fire. Two divisions of the French attacked the Russians in front, while two others assailed them in flank by the side of Plauen. With such skill was St-Cyr's attack conceived, and with such vigour was it executed, that Ostermann's troops were broken at all points, and obliged to retire in disorder, which their great superiority in cavalry alone prevented from being converted into a flight. As it was, the loss they sustained amounted to twelve hundred prisoners, ten guns, and a bridge equipage, besides fifteen hundred killed and wounded.[3] Disconcerted by this check, Ostermann hastened to regain the

[2] *Ante*, ch. lxxxi. § 8.

Oct. 17.

[3] Die Grosse Chron. i. 1152, 1155. St-Cyr, iv. 206, 218. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 166. Bout. 177, 178. Jom. iv. 491.

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Bohemian frontier, which he crossed two days after; and the garrison of Töplitz, consisting of ten thousand Austrians, having advanced to his support, St-Cyr relinquished the pursuit and returned to Dresden, where in the interval all the works erected by the enemy to straiten the city had been demolished.

31. The blockade is resumed after the battle of Leipsic.

This advantage was considerable, and alike creditable to the talents of St-Cyr, and the valour of the troops under his command; but it was an accessary only, and did not counterbalance the great events of the campaign. It was in the plains of Leipsic that the fate of Dresden and its immense garrison was decided. When Napoleon set out from the Saxon capital for Düben, he left for the troops it contained only provisions for seven, and forage for three days;[1] and so complete was the exhaustion of the surrounding country, that the garrison were able to add hardly anything to these scanty stores, during the few days that they had regained possession of the open country. At the same time, the influx of stragglers, sick and wounded, left behind by the Grand Army on leaving the Elbe, continued unabated. All attempts to execute Napoleon's orders, by sending the maimed to Torgau, had failed, under circumstances of more than usual horror;* and Dresden, encumbered with agonised and useless mouths, soon found itself beset by a double amount of enemies. No sooner was the battle of Leipsic decided, than Schwartzenberg, justly eager to secure so splendid a prize as the fruit of his victory, detached Klenau with his whole force to reinforce Ostermann,[2] who in the mean time had more than recruited his

[1] St-Cyr, iv. 202.

[2] St-Cyr, iv. 227. Bout. 178. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 166. Die Grosse Chron. i. 1155, 1157.

* "As soon as the wounded were apprised of the intention to remove them, they gave themselves up to transports of joy, thinking they would now at length revisit their country. In such multitudes did they crowd, or rather crawl down to the quays, that the boats were in danger of sinking, and one was actually submerged, and all on board perished. Nevertheless, though a few only could be received, from the limited number of boats, nothing could prevail on these unhappy wretches to return to the hospitals. They preferred lying down in rows along the river-side, to be in readiness to get into the first

losses by drafts from Töplitz, and the other garrisons and depots in the interior of Bohemia. Their troops, fully fifty thousand strong, effected a junction on the 26th, and resumed the blockade of Dresden on the day following; when St-Cyr, in no condition to keep the field against such superior forces, was obliged to shut himself up with a dejected army, and hardly any provisions.

1813. Oct. 26. Oct. 27.

32. Miserable condition and difficulties of St-Cyr.

The condition of the French marshal was now in the highest degree alarming, and such as might well have struck terror into the most dauntless breast. Although the troops under his orders had exerted themselves to the utmost, during the ten days that they had the command of the adjacent country, to recruit their slender stock of provisions; yet such was the total exhaustion of its resources by the previous requisitions of Napoleon, and the passage of so many vast armies over its surface, that they were barely able to maintain themselves by the most rigorous exactions, without adding anything to the miserable stores, adequate only to seven days' consumption, which Napoleon had left for their use. On the 27th October, therefore, they found themselves shut up in Dresden with this scanty stock of provisions; while, at the same time, the depression of the troops, the almost total exhaustion of ammunition, the rapid desertion of all the German auxiliaries within the place, and the superior forces of the enemy before its walls, rendered it altogether impossible to attempt to make their way out by force of arms. During the whole of this period they were left without any orders, direct or indirect, from Napoleon,[1] or any other intelligence than the rumours,

[1] St-Cyr, iv. 247, 250. Bout. 177. Vaud. 241, 242. Plotho, ii. 532, 533.

boat that appeared. The assemblage of these spectres, who lay out all night in the cold, presented the most hideous spectacle which a war, where such scenes were too frequent, could exhibit. But the superiority of the enemy, and the manner in which Napoleon had conducted the war, rendered the prescribed evacuation totally impossible. All the hospitals in the rear, sooner or later, fell into the enemy's hands. Three thousand were sent from Dresden in boats, but I never ascertained whether they reached Torgau."—St-Cyr, *Histoire Militaire*, iv. 200, 201.

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vague and exaggerated, which prevailed as to the disaster of Leipsic. Driven to desperation, St-Cyr endeavoured to make a sortie, with fifteen thousand men, by the right bank of the Elbe, in order to effect, if possible, a junction with the garrison of Torgau or Wittenberg, and with their united force cut his way across to the Rhine.

33. St-Cyr in vain tries a sortie. Nov. 6.

But the Allied generals had information of his design, and were on the alert. General Wied-Runkel met them with three thousand men on the 6th; and though the French were nearly five times that number, yet such was their physical attenuation from want, and moral depression from disaster, that they were unable to force their way through, and, after a slight combat, were driven back again into Dresden. This check, and throwing back of mouths, proved fatal both to the spirits and resources of the garrison. Discouragement became universal, escape seemed impossible, provisions of every sort were absolutely exhausted, discipline was dissolved by suffering: the miserable soldiers wandered about like spectres in the streets, or sank in woful crowds into the hospitals.

> "Semanimes errare viis, dum stare valebant,
> Adspiceres; flentes alios, terræque jacentes,
> Lassaque versantes supremo lumina motu.
> Membraque pendentis tendunt ad sidera cœli;
> Hic, illic, ubi mors deprenderat, exhalantes.
> Quo se cumque acies oculorum flexerat; illic
> Vulgus erat stratum." *

"Such," says an eye-witness, "was the famishing condition of the French troops, that they pillaged for the twentieth time the neighbouring vineyards, and cut flesh off the limbs of the wounded horses lying by the wayside. In the interior of the town, misery had risen to the highest pitch. The mills were idle: there was neither grain to grind, nor water to turn the wheels. The bakers had shut up their shops, having no more bread to sell:[1] a miserable crowd surrounded their doors, demand-

[1] St-Cyr, iv. 247, 250. Odel. ii. 227, 234. Die Grosse Chron. i. 1156, 1160.

* Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, vii. 577.

ing, with mingled threats and prayers, their accustomed supplies. Many of the poor had been for several days without bread; and, as the stock of butcher-meat was also nearly expended, they were reduced to the most miserable shifts to support life.

34. Miseries of the French troops.

"Nor were the French soldiers in any better situation: every day they killed thirty horses; and, instead of the accustomed ration of an ounce and a half of butcher-meat, to which they had been long reduced, they got nothing but double that quantity of horse-flesh, often so bad that the soldiers could not eat it, even though pressed by the pangs of hunger. At last, however, famine overcame their repugnance, and the miserable wretches disputed with each other the half-putrid carcasses which they found in the streets, and soon their bones were laid bare, and the very tendons of the dead animals eagerly devoured. The ravages which a contagious fever made on the inhabitants of the town, added to the public distress. Among the citizens alone, not less than three hundred were carried off weekly by it. Two hundred dead bodies were every day brought out of the military hospitals. Such was the accumulation in the churchyards, that the gravediggers could not inter them, and they were laid naked, in ghastly rows, along the place of sepulture. The bodies were heaped in such numbers on the dead carts, that frequently they fell from them, and the wheels gave a frightful sound in crushing the bones of the corpses which thus lay on the streets.*

> "Corpora missa neci, nullis de more feruntur
> Funeribus; neque enim capiebant funera portæ.
> Aut inhumata premunt terras, aut dantur in altos
> Indotata rogos."

The hospital attendants and carters trampled down the dead in the carts, like baggage of straw, to make room for more; and, not unfrequently, some of the bodies gave

* Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, vii. 605.

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signs of life, and even emitted shrieks under this harsh usage. Several of those thrown into the Elbe for dead, were revived by the sudden immersion in cold water, and the wretches were seen struggling in vain with the waves, by which they were soon swallowed up. Medicines and hospital stores there were none; and almost all the surgeons and apothecaries were dead."[1]

[1] Odel. ii. 227, 234. Plotho, ii. 532.

35. Capitulation of the place.

At length the French marshal, unable to prolong his defence, entered into a capitulation, in virtue of which the Allies gained possession of the town, and the French laid down their arms, on condition of being sent back to France, and not serving against the Allies till regularly exchanged. On the day following, the troops began to defile out of the town in six columns, and, after laying down their arms, proceeded on the road to France. The result showed the magnitude of the success which had been achieved, and the terrible disasters which were accumulating round Napoleon's empire since the catastrophe of Leipsic; for the number who surrendered were no less than thirty-two generals, seventeen hundred and ninety-five officers, and thirty-three thousand private soldiers, of whom twenty-five thousand were able to bear arms.[2]

[2] Die Grosse Chron. l. 1159, 1160. St Cyr, iv. 247, 257. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 166, 167. Bout. 178. Odel. ii. 230, 238. Plotho, ii. 532.

36. Terms of the capitulation, which are violated by the Allied generals.

The terms awarded to the French garrison were nearly the same as those which Napoleon, in 1796, had granted to Marshal Wurmser at the capitulation of Mantua;[3] and the Allies obtained possession, by the surrender, of no less than two hundred and forty pieces of cannon. When the troops marched out, they afforded a melancholy proof of the degree to which the exactions of the Emperor had strained the physical resources of France, and his total disregard of the comforts or subsistence of his soldiers; for such was the weakness of the infantry, arising from youth, fatigue, and famine, that, by the admission of St-Cyr himself, three-fourths of them would have perished before they reached the Rhine.* Such as it was, how-

[3] *Ante*, ch. xx. § 151.

Nov. 19.

* "Les soldats, trop jeunes pour supporter les fatigues d'une campagne aussi

ever, the capitulation was disapproved of by Schwartzenberg and the Allied sovereigns, who intimated to St-Cyr that no terms of surrender could be admitted but such as provided for the garrison being conducted as prisoners of war into the Austrian states; but that, if he was dissatisfied with these conditions, the troops would be replaced in Dresden in the same situation in which they were before the convention had been concluded. This offer, which was communicated to St-Cyr at Altenburg, on the road to France, the day following the capitulation, was felt by him, as indeed it was equally by his opponents, to be perfectly elusory; as not only were the enemy now in Dresden, and had been there for seven days, but they had become acquainted with all its weak points, and in particular with the absolute want of provisions to subsist a besieged garrison even for a single day. He rightly declined to accede, therefore, to the alternative offered of returning to Dresden; and, being unable to make any resistance, preferred being conducted, with all his followers, as prisoners of war into Bohemia; loudly protesting against this violation of the convention, as a breach of good faith and of the laws of war, which would one day recoil with fearful force on the heads of the parties who were guilty of it.[1]

Nov. 20.

[1] Chastellar to St-Cyr, 19th Nov. 1813. St-Cyr to Chastellar, 20th Nov. 1813. St-Cyr, iv. 497, 499. See Capitulation in St-Cyr, iv. 484.

37. Reflections on the breach of this convention by the Allies.

This refusal on the part of the Allied sovereigns, to ratify a convention concluded by the general in the full command of their armies on the occasion, has excited, as well it might, the most vehement feelings of indignation among the French writers. There can be no doubt that it was to the last degree impolitic in Klenau to have acceded to such a convention, when escape and subsistence were equally beyond the power of the enemy; and when, by simply maintaining his position for a few days, without firing a shot, he must have compelled them to

active, et des privations si longues, étaient à la vérité dans un tel état d'épuisement que la moitié, et peut-être les trois quarts, n'auraient pu regagner les bords du Rhin."—St-Cyr, *Histoire Militaire*, iv. 256.

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surrender at discretion. It is equally certain that, even if half the garrison reached the Rhine, they would have proved no small acquisition to Napoleon, whose greatest weakness was now likely to arise from the want of experienced soldiers, and whose necessities might render him little scrupulous in his adherence to the treaty, as to their not serving again till exchanged. But all these considerations are reasons why the capitulation should never have been entered into; they afford none to vindicate its violation. Schwartzenberg might have debarred his lieutenants from entering into any convention but such as contained a reservation of his sanction; but he had not done so. Klenau had full powers; and the capitulation, upon the faith of which the French had delivered up Dresden, surrendered their guns and laid down their arms, was clearly within his duties and province as the general commanding the siege, and was absolute, without any condition or suspensive clause. In these circumstances, it was unquestionably obligatory upon the honour of the victors, who are bound, by the most sacred of all ties, to respect the rights of those who are in their power, and have become incapable of making any further resistance.

38. Injustice of this proceeding on their part.

Justice in such a case can admit of no equivocation, derived even from the most pressing reasons of expediency. Honour regards all treaties with the vanquished as debts which must be paid. The proposal to reinstate St-Cyr in the Saxon capital, after its defences and total want of provisions had become known, and his own troops were far advanced on the road to the Rhine, though the best that could be done next to observing the convention, was plainly an offer such as the French garrison neither could, nor were bound to accept. In violating this convention, the Allied sovereigns did not imitate the honourable fidelity with which Napoleon observed the conditions of the capitulation of Mantua, granted to Wurmser in 1796;[1] but rather took a model from the cordial approba-

[1] *Ante*, ch. xx. § 151.

tion which he gave to the unworthy fraud by which the bridge of the Danube was surprised in 1805,[1] or the express example which he had set of disavowing an armistice, in his own refusal to ratify that of Treviso, concluded in 1801 by his lieutenant, Brune.[2] Condemning equally such deviations from the path of honour by all parties engaged in the contest, it is with pride and gratitude that the English historian must refer to the conduct of his own country on occasion of a similar crisis; and when he recollects that the convention of Cintra, though unanimously condemned by the English people, was executed, on the admission of their opponents themselves, with scrupulous fidelity by the British government,* he must admit that such an honourable distinction was cheaply purchased by all the advantages which its faithful observance gave to the enemy.[3]

[1] *Ante*, ch. xl. § 106.

[2] *Ante*, ch. xxxii. § 71.

[3] *Ante*, ch. liv. § 75.

39. Sir Charles Stewart prevents a similar capitulation being granted to Davoust.

The interest excited by the refusal, on the part of the Allied sovereigns, to ratify the convention of Dresden, was, however, attended with one good effect, in preventing a similar political mistake in the case of Marshal Davoust and the garrison of Hamburg. Bernadotte, who had now assumed the command in chief in that quarter, was far from evincing the same activity and vigour in his operations against the important French army shut up in that city, which he had displayed in bringing to a conclusion hostilities with the ancient rivals of Sweden—the Danes. On the contrary, he had at this period entered into negotiations with the French marshal, the object of which was, that, upon condition of surrendering Hamburg and the adjacent forts, he was to be permitted to retire to France with all his forces. He, in the first instance, had promised Sir Charles Stewart that he would not enter into such a capitulation without his consent; but no

* "The convention of Cintra, though condemned by public opinion in England, was executed with honourable fidelity by the English government."—Foy, iv. 356. "Look at England. She condemned the convention of Cintra, but did not the less execute its provisions with scrupulous faith."—Napoleon.

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sooner had the former been called to Frankfort, to attend on behalf of England the conferences of the Allied powers, than he sent express instructions to Walmoden to bring about a convention of such a character with Davoust. But this equivocal step did not escape the vigilant eye of the English military plenipotentiary, who, the moment he received intelligence of what was in agitation, despatched such energetic remonstrances against the proposed measure, that the Prince-Royal was obliged to abandon it.* And thus the same eminent and patriotic officer, who, by his moral courage on the eve of the battle of Leipsic, had gained for the Allies the decisive advantage of bringing the Prince-Royal's army up to the charge on that eventful day, now rendered to his country the not less important service of preventing a capitulation, which, by restoring twenty-five thousand veteran troops to the standards of Napoleon, might have entirely changed the fate of the war next spring in France.[1]

[1] Lond. 210, 211.

40. Fall of Stettin, and siege of Torgau. Nov. 21.

The fall of Dresden was shortly after followed by that of the other chief fortresses on the Oder and the Vistula. On the 21st November, Stettin, which had been closely blockaded for eight months, and the garrison of which had exhausted their last means of subsistence, surrendered: the troops, still eight thousand strong, were made prisoners of war, and three hundred and fifty guns on the walls and in the magazines fell into the hands of the

* "I trust your Royal Highness, with your wonted condescension, will permit me to express the sentiments of Great Britain on a military question, in which it must feel the deepest interest. To all appearance Denmark is now with us, and Marshal Davoust is gone. Should he escape to France by means of any capitulation, I foresee it will affix the deepest stain on the military glory of the army of the north; it would be nothing less than to transport the corps of Davoust from a fatal spot, where its destruction is inevitable, into one in which it might again appear in battle against the Allies. My prince, you have loaded me with your kindness; be assured it is of your glory, of your personal interests, that I am thinking. I will answer for the opinion of my country. It is with the most sensible pain that I have recently heard, even after the assurances to the contrary which you gave me yesterday evening, that General Walmoden has received fresh orders to the effect I so earnestly deprecate."—SIR CHARLES STEWART (now Marquis Londonderry) *to the* PRINCE-ROYAL, 16*th November* 1813.

Allies, who shortly after despatched the blockading force to reinforce the corps of Tauenzein, to which it belonged. Fifteen hundred Dutch troops, who formed part of the garrison, immediately entered the ranks of the Allies—an ominous circumstance, which presaged but too surely the revolt of Holland, which in effect soon took place. Torgau was not long in following the example of Stettin, although the more recent investment of the place rendered it necessary to have recourse to an actual siege, instead of the more tedious method of blockade. On the 23d October, Tauenzein sat down before its walls; and on the 1st November the investment was completed, and the trenches were opened on the 22d. The approaches of the besiegers were proceeding rapidly, when an armistice was agreed to on the 28th, with a view to arranging the terms of a capitulation. But when the French commander discovered that an unconditional surrender was required, he broke off the conferences, and hostilities were resumed.[1]

Oct. 23.

Nov. 22. Nov. 28. [1] Bout. 179. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 167. Die Grosse Chron. i. 1161, 1169.

They were not, however, of long duration. Disease, more terrible than the sword of the enemy, was making the most unheard-of ravages within the walls. Typhus fever, the well-known and never-failing attendant on human suffering, was carrying off the garrison by hundreds daily; while thousands encumbered those awful dens of misery, the military hospitals. Decimated by death, attenuated by suffering, the garrison were in no condition to maintain the place against the impetuous and repeated attacks of the Allies. After a fortnight of open trenches, the outworks were carried by assault, and the rampart seriously shaken by the fire of the besiegers' artillery. The governor, Dutaillis, finding the troops under his command incapable of manning the works, from the extraordinary ravages of fer, was obliged to surrender at discretion. Including the sick in the hospitals, the number who were captured was ten thousand, the poor remains of eighteen thousand who had sought refuge

41. Dreadful pestilence there, and fall of the place. Dec. 6.

Dec. 26.

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there after the retreat of the Grand Army from the Elbe. But such was the danger of contagion in that great pest-house, that the Allies did not venture to enter the fortress till the 10th of January. In Torgau was taken the whole reserve park of the Grand Army, the want of which had been so severely felt at the close of the battle of Leipsic, including two hundred and eighty-seven guns; but these advantages were dearly purchased by the terrible epidemic which, issuing from its wo-struck walls, made the circuit, in the following years, of every country of Europe, until, among the Venetian paupers in 1816, and the Irish poor in 1817, it encountered a starving population, where, amidst equal suffering, it swept away numbers proportionally greater into the common charnel-house of mortality.[1]*

[1] Die Grosse Chron. i. 1169, 1171. Plotho, ii. 547. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 168. Bout. 186.

42. Operations before Dantzic during 1813.

During the course of this terrible struggle on the Elbe, the fortresses on the Vistula, still remaining in the hands of the French, have almost escaped observation; but the time was now approaching when their defence, after a siege or blockade of nearly twelve months, could no longer be prolonged. Rapp, as already mentioned, had done everything which firm resolution and rigorous discipline could effect, to restore order among the motley group of five-and-thirty thousand men, who had taken refuge in Dantzic after the Moscow retreat, and in some degree he had succeeded. Disease, however, as usual after all these disastrous retreats, soon began to make ravages in the interior of its walls, and, before the end of January 1813, six thousand were in hospital. The garrison, nevertheless, was still so powerful, that the Russian blockading force, which was not of greater strength, and composed chiefly of landwehr, was unable to confine it within the circuit of the walls; and in the course of January and February

Jan. 29. Feb. 6.

* The author witnessed the poor of Venice labouring under this epidemic in 1816, and the Irish prostrated by its ravages in 1817. The imagination of Dante himself never conceived anything so terrible as the scenes of woe then exhibited under that frightful scourge—the sad bequest to humanity of the ambition and the wars of Napoleon.

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several severe actions took place, with various success, but without the besiegers being able to complete the investment. Early in March, the Russians, being reinforced by the troops who had successfully terminated the blockade of Pillau, amounting to six thousand men, made a vigorous attack on the fortified posts held by the French in advance of the city, particularly Langenfurth, Stotzenberg, and D'Ohra; but they were repulsed after a severe action, with the loss of fifteen hundred men. Encouraged by this success, Rapp shortly after made a sortie to collect subsistence, which was beginning to fail, in which he in a great measure succeeded, and made himself master of an hospital of the enemy, containing several hundred sick and wounded.[1]

March 5.

March 24.

[1] Vict. et Conq. xxii. 169, 171. Vaud. i. 244, 245. Bout. 179. Die Grosse Chron. i. 1142, 1147.

43. Operations there till the commencement of the regular siege in October.

Disease, however, now came to the aid of the Allies; and the accumulation of so many troops—some of them bringing the seeds of contagion with their columns into the fortress—began to produce the most fatal ravages. In the end of April, the health of the garrison having been in some degree restored, a sortie was hazarded into the island of Nehrung, the fertility and agricultural riches of which promised to afford considerable resources for the garrison. The Russians, three thousand strong, tried to stop the columns, but they were defeated with heavy loss, and the French advanced eight leagues along the island, making spoil of all its provisions, and bringing back grain in abundance to the fortress, besides five hundred head of cattle. In the course of May, however, the besieging army received considerable reinforcements from the interior of Russia, and the adjoining provinces of Prussia; and in the beginning of June, the Duke of Würtemberg, who had assumed the command, had thirty thousand combatants under his banners. Yet notwithstanding this, Rapp, on the 9th June, again made a sortie at the head of fifteen thousand men; and although defeated at some points, he succeeded in bringing considerable stores of forage and growing rye into

April 29.

June 9.

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the fortress. In this affair, both parties lost about twelve hundred men. Hostilities were soon after terminated by the armistice of Pleswitz, and not again

June 10. resumed till the end of August—the fortress, in the intermediate period, having been revictualled every five days, by commissioners conjointly appointed for that purpose, in terms of the convention. The armistice terminated on the 28th, and several obstinate conflicts took

Aug. 29. place, on the following morning, at the advanced posts; in the course of which, though success was balanced, the besiegers sensibly gained ground, and contracted the circle within which the posts of the besieged were confined. During the whole of September repeated sorties

Sept. 16, 24, 29. were made by the garrison, some of which were successful and others defeated; but the besieged, after a most honourable resistance, were at length thrown back at all points into the fortress; and the Duke of Würtemberg having received considerable reinforcements, and a regular battering-train, operations in form commenced in the first week of October.[1]

[1] Vaud. i. 246. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 178, 179. Dartois, Siège de Dantzic, 54, 72. Plotho, ii. 537, 539.

44. Continuation of the siege.

The bombardment commenced on the 8th, before the breaching batteries were ready, or any impression had been made even upon the external works of the place. With such vigour was the fire kept up, that in a short time the town was in flames in several places. During the distraction produced by these conflagrations, the principal attack was directed against the suburb called Scholtenhausen, and the redoubts which covered it; and, after a vigorous cannonade for some days, the besiegers

Oct. 16. succeeded in establishing themselves in that outwork, though after sustaining a loss of a thousand men. From this advanced position the bombardment was resumed with redoubled vigour and terrible efficacy: soon the flames broke out in eight-and-twenty different quarters; the principal magazines in the place, both of provisions and clothing, were consumed;[2] and, notwithstanding the extent of their supplies, provisions began to grow scarce.

[2] Dartois, Siège de Dantzic, 12, 18. Vaud. i. 246. Jom. iv. 494. Die Grosse Chron. i. 1149, 1150.

The body of the place, however, was still uninjured: the rampart was unshaken, and the firm spirit of Rapp could not brook the idea of submission.

45. Fall of the place. Nov. 3.

At length, in the beginning of November, the regular siege commenced, and parallels were begun to be run with great vigour. Although the approaches of the besiegers were sensibly retarded by the heroic exploits of a small corps of volunteers, who more than once carried terror and conflagration into the centre of the besiegers' lines, yet their progress was rapid and alarming. All the external works of the place fell successively into the enemy's hands: a naval officer, who was despatched to make the Emperor acquainted with the distressed state of the garrison, was unable, after the most heroic efforts, to penetrate farther than Copenhagen: desertion was taking place to an alarming extent, and all hopes of being relieved having vanished with the battle of Leipsic, Rapp at length consented to capitulate; stipulating, however, that the garrison should be permitted to retire to France, on condition of not serving again till exchanged. The garrison still consisted of sixteen thousand men, of whom about one-half were French, and the remainder Germans and Poles. By the capitulation, it was provided that the ratification of the Emperor of Russia should be obtained; and he having refused to sanction the condition relative to the return of the garrison to France, the same offer was made to them as had been made to St-Cyr, that they should be reinstated in the fortress in the same position in which they were before they left it. This was strictly legal in this case, as the sanction of the Emperor had been expressly stipulated for in the convention; and as it was not agreed to, Rapp and the French were conducted as prisoners of war into Russia, but almost all the auxiliaries immediately entered the Allied ranks.[1]

Nov. 7.

Nov. 9.

Nov. 29.

[1] Die Grosse Chron. i. 1149, 1152. Dartois, Siège de Dantzic, 79, 115. Vaud. i. 246. Jom. iv. 494. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 182, 185.

The lesser places still held by the French on the Vistula having exhausted their last means of subsistence, surren-

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dered shortly after. The garrison of Zamosc, three thousand strong, capitulated on the 22d December: that of Modlin, with twelve hundred men, three days after; so that the tricolor flag no longer waved to the eastward of the Oder. About the same time General Dalton, who commanded the French garrison in Erfurth, finding himself not sufficiently strong to defend the whole circuit of the walls, retired into the citadel of St Petersburg, on the rocky summit of which he still maintained himself when the city was surrendered by capitulation in the beginning of January. At the close of the campaign, France retained only, of her immense possessions beyond the Rhine, Hamburg, Magdeburg, and Wittenberg, on the Elbe; Cüstrin and Glogau on the Oder; and the citadels of Erfurth and Würtzburg. All the rest of the places, garrisoned or influenced by her arms, had been torn from her; the Confederation of the Rhine was dissolved, and its forces were marching under the Allied banners; and, refluent over the bridges of Mayence, eighty thousand men, with two hundred guns, sad and dejected, had retired into France — the poor remains of four hundred thousand combatants, with twelve hundred cannon, who, three months before, still held the scales of fortune equal on the banks of the Elbe. The contest in Germany was over; French domination beyond the Rhine was at an end; thirty thousand prisoners taken on the field, and eighty thousand since surrendered in garrison, constituted the proud trophies of the battle of Leipsic.[1]

46. Surrender of the forts of Erfurth, Zamosc, and Modlin. Dec. 22. Dec. 25. Dec. 20.

Jan. 6, 1814.

[1] Vaud. 247. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 180, 185. Bout. 180, 181. Die Grosse Chron. i. 1127, 1141. Richter, ii. 411. Plotho, ii. 524, 526.

47. Universal discontent in Holland.

Atlas, Plate 4.

The universal fermentation produced in Europe by the deliverance of Germany, was not long of spreading to the DUTCH PROVINCES. The yoke of Napoleon, universally grievous from the enormous pecuniary exactions with which it was attended, and the wasting military conscriptions to which it immediately led, had been in a peculiar manner felt as oppressive in Holland, from the maritime and commercial habits of the people, and the

total stoppage of all their sources of industry, which the naval war and long-continued blockade of their coasts had occasioned. They had tasted for nearly twenty years of the last drop of humiliation in the cup of the vanquished —that of being compelled themselves to aid in upholding the system which was exterminating their resources, and to purchase with the blood of their children the ruin of their country. These feelings, which had for years existed in such intensity, as to have rendered revolt inevitable but for the evident hopelessness at all former times of the attempt, could no longer be restrained after the battle of Leipsic had thrown down the colossus of French external power, and the approach of the Allied standards to their frontiers had opened to the people the means of salvation. From the Hanse Towns the flame of independence spread to the nearest cities of the old United Provinces; and the small number of French troops in the country at once encouraged revolt and paved the way for external aid.[1]

[1] Die Grosse Chron. i. 1114, 1117. Bout. 174. Ann. Reg. 1813, 160, 161. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 164. Better, i. 217.

48. Which breaks out into open insurrection.

At this period the whole troops which Napoleon had in Holland did not exceed six thousand French, and two regiments of Germans, upon whose fidelity to their colours little reliance could be placed. Upon the approach of the Allied troops under Bulow, who advanced by the road of Munster, and Winzingerode, who soon followed from the same quarter, the douaniers all withdrew from the coast, the garrison of Amsterdam retired, and the whole disposable force of the country was concentrated at Utrecht, to form a corps of observation, and act according to circumstances. This was the signal for a general revolt. At Amsterdam, the troops were no sooner gone than the inhabitants rose in insurrection, deposed the Imperial authorities, hoisted the orange flag, and established a provisional government with a view to the restoration of the ancient order of things; yet not violently or with cruelty, but with the calmness and composure which attest the exercise of social rights by a

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people long habituated to their enjoyment. The same change took place, at the same time and in the same orderly manner, at Rotterdam, Dordrecht, Delft, Leyden, Haarlem, and the other chief towns. The people, everywhere, amidst cries of "*Orange Boven!*" and universal rapture, mounted the orange cockade, and reinstated the ancient authorities. After twenty years of foreign domination and suffering, the glorious spectacle was exhibited, of a people peaceably regaining their independence, without shedding a drop of blood, and, unstained either by passion or vengeance, reverting to the institutions of former times.[1] *

[1] Valentini, ii. 58. Capef. x. 278, 279. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 164, 165. Bout. 174, 175. Ann. Reg. 1813, 160, 161. Die Grosse Chron. i. 1116, 1119.

49. Landing of the Prince of Orange, and arrival of the Russian outposts. Nov. 27.

Military and political consequences of the highest importance immediately followed this uncontrollable outbreak of public enthusiasm. A deputation from Holland waited on the Prince-Regent of England and the Prince of Orange, in London: the latter shortly after embarked on board an English line-of-battle ship, the Warrior, and on the 27th landed at Scheveling, from whence he proceeded to the Hague. Meanwhile the French troops and coast-guards, who had concentrated at Utrecht, seeing that the general effervescence was not as yet supported by any solid military force, and that the people, though they had all hoisted the orange flag, were not aided by any corps of the Allies, recovered from their consternation, and made a general forward movement against Amsterdam.[2] Before they got there, however, a body of three hundred Cossacks had reached that capital, where they

Nov. 23. [2] Val. ii. 58, 59. Koch, i. 55. Bout. 175. Ann. Reg. 1813, 161, 162.

* The following proclamation, issued by the provisional government of the Hague in name of the Prince of Orange, is singularly descriptive of this memorable and bloodless revolution:—"*Orange Boven!* Holland is free; the Allies advance on Utrecht, the English have been invited, the French are flying on all sides. The sea is opened: commerce revives: the spirit of party has ceased—*what we have suffered is pardoned and forgiven.* Able and intelligent men have been called to the helm of government, who have invited the prince to resume the national sovereignty. We join our forces to those of the Allies, to compel the enemy to make peace; the people will ere long have a day of rejoicing at the expense of government; but every species of pillage or excess is absolutely forbidden. Every one returns thanks to God: old times have returned. *Orange Boven!*"—See CAPEFIGUE, x. 278, 279, note.

were received with enthusiastic joy: and this advanced guard was soon after followed by General Benkendorf's brigade, which, after travelling by post from Zwoll to Harderwyk, embarked at the latter place, and, by the aid of a favourable wind, reached Amsterdam on the 1st of December.

50. General expulsion of the French from the country.

The Russian general immediately advanced against the forts of Mayder and Hafweg, of which he made himself master, taking twenty pieces of cannon and six hundred prisoners; while on the eastern frontier, General Oppen, with Bulow's advanced guards, carried Dornbourg by assault on the 23d, and, advancing against Arnheim, threw the garrison, three thousand strong, which strove to prevent the place being invested, with great loss back into the town. Next day, Bulow himself came up with the main strength of his corps, and, as the ditches were still dry, hazarded an escalade, which proved entirely successful; the greater part of the garrison retiring to Nimeguen, by the bridge of the Rhine. The French troops, finding themselves thus threatened on all sides, withdrew altogether from Holland: the fleet at the Texel hoisted the orange flag, with the exception of Admiral Verhuel, who, with a body of marines that still proved faithful to Napoleon, threw himself with honourable fidelity into the fort of the Texel. Amsterdam, amidst transports of enthusiasm, received the beloved representative of the house of Orange. Before the close of the year, the tricolor flag floated only on Bergen-op-zoom and a few of the southern frontier fortresses; and Europe beheld the prodigy of the seat of war having been transferred in a single year from the banks of the Niemen to those of the Scheldt.[1]

Dec. 2. Nov. 23. Nov. 29. Nov. 30.

[1] Koch, i. 56. Val. ii. 58, 59. Dec. l. Ann. Reg. 1813, 161, 162. Bout. 175, 176. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 165. Die Grosse Chron. i. 1119, 1121.

51. Operations in Italy during this campaign.

To complete the picture of this memorable year, there only remains to give a sketch of the Italian campaign, and of the operations of Wellington in the Spanish peninsula. The former can be but a sketch; for the operations of the opposite armies, though numerous and

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complicated, led to no material result; it was on the fields of Leipsic and Vitoria that the fate of the French empire was decided, and on them that the broad light of history requires to be thrown. Yet the narrative, how brief soever, will not be without its interest; for it will recall the memory of other days, when the dazzling light of the young Republic played around the bayonets of Napoleon's grenadiers; and after a long sojourn amidst the rough sounds of the German regions, there is a charm in the sweet accents of the Italian tongue.

52. Eugene's dispositions and measures for the defence of Lombardy.

Atlas, Plate xi.

Eugene Beauharnais, as already mentioned, retired from the grand army in Germany when Napoleon took the command, and he arrived at Milan on the 18th of May. His first care was to organise an army in Lombardy, which might put him in a condition to inspire feelings of apprehension in the cabinet of Vienna, or resist any attempt which it might make to recover, by force of arms, its lost and long-coveted possessions in Italy. Napoleon, by a decree, early in May intrusted the formation of the new army of Italy to his Viceroy, and it was to be composed entirely of native soldiers, or conscripts from the French departments adjoining the Alps. Though this ordinance bespoke strongly the confidence of the Emperor in his Italian subjects, and might be supposed to increase the patriotic spirit which was developed in the north of Italy, yet it was attended with one obvious danger, which came to tell with signal severity upon the fortunes of the empire in its last moments. These soldiers were bound by no tie to the tramontane regions, and might be expected all to desert, if the fortune of war should compel the French eagles to retire across the Alps. When the Viceroy returned to Italy, he found only the skeletons of a few regiments, and three hundred officers and non-commissioned officers, who had been forwarded by post from Spain—the whole forces of the kingdom of Italy had perished in Russia, or been marched to the Elbe.[1] But his energy and activity overcame

May 10.

[1] Vignolles, Précis des Opér. des Armées d'Italie en 1813–1814, 9, 12. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 188, 192. Norvins, Portf. de 1813; ii. 464, 465.

every difficulty ; and, by the beginning of July, fifty-two thousand men were in arms, of whom forty-five thousand infantry, and fifteen hundred horse, were present with the eagles.

53. Austrian forces, and position of both armies.

On the other side, the Austrians were not idle. Early in July a respectable force was collected on the frontiers of Illyria, under the orders of Field-marshal Hiller ; and before the end of the month it was raised to seven divisions, mustering fully fifty thousand combatants, of a description much superior to the Italian conscripts. In addition to this, they raised the landwehr of Illyria and Croatia, and, reinforced by several thousands of these hardy mountaineers, commenced the campaign the moment they received intelligence of the armistice being denounced, on the 17th August. At this period the Viceroy occupied the following positions. Two divisions under Grenier were stationed between Udina and Gorizia ; and the remainder of the army, under Verdier, Marcognet, Gratian, and Palombini, stretched by the left by Palma Nuova to the blood-stained heights of Tarvis and Villach, occupying thus the whole eastern passes from Italy into Germany. Hiller's force, directly in front, extended from opposite Villach on his right to Agram on his left, where he had concentrated two divisions ; and the ferment in the provinces of Croatia, ceded to France, already promised the most favourable reception to the Austrians, if they invaded that portion of the spoils which France had won from the Hereditary States.[1]

1 Vignolles, 19, 24. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 192, 195. Norvins, Rec. de 1813; ii. 465, 466.

54. The Austrians commence the campaign, and gain considerable successes.

The Austrians being the stronger party, were the first to commence hostilities. On the 17th, two columns passed the frontier stream of the Save at Agram, and directed their march towards Karlstadt and Fiume. General Jeannin, who commanded in that quarter, at first made preparations for resistance ; but finding himself speedily surrounded by an insurrection, which broke out on all sides at the sight of the much-loved Austrian standards, he was obliged to abandon the first city and

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fall back on the second. This retrograde movement threw the whole Illyrian provinces into a blaze. All Croatia was soon in insurrection; the flame spread along the Dalmatian shore; and, as far as the mouths of the Cattaro, the whole mountaineers were in arms to throw off the yoke of France. This vehement ebullition, coupled with the numerical inferiority of Eugene, who found himself assailed by above fifty thousand German troops, for whom his newly-raised Italians were no adequate match, rendered it impossible for him to maintain his ground along the whole frontier. In consequence, abandoning Fiume and the whole coast of Illyria, he ascended with the bulk of his forces the course of the Isonzo, and took post in the intrenched camp at Tarvis, hoping to make good the passes till time was afforded for the armaments to be completed in his rear. Meanwhile Villach had been evacuated by the Italian troops; but no sooner did Eugene's reinforcement arrive in that direction than it was retaken by three French battalions: again it was carried by the Austrians, and finally gained by Eugene, who established his headquarters in that city. But these advantages were obtained by denuding the right and maritime provinces, and Fiume was occupied by the Austrians under General Nugent, without opposition, in the end of August.[1]

Aug. 24. Aug. 29. Aug. 30. 1 Vict. et Conq. xxii. 196, 197. Norvins, Portfeuille, ii. 466, 467.

55. Obstinate resistance of the Viceroy, and his successes against them. Sept. 2.

On the 26th of August General Pino attacked the Austrian intrenchments on Mont Leobel; but the Italians failed entirely against that formidable bulwark, and were thrown back in utter disorder on Krainburg. Eugene brought them back to the charge in greater force, and the Austrians were driven out. The design of Hiller, at this period, was to have forced the enemy to evacuate the passes in his front in the Julian Alps, and retire behind the line of the Isonzo; and with that view he had occupied Fiestritz, from which point he could at pleasure either menace Tarvis, or turn and descend the valley of the Upper Save. To frustrate this

Sept. 6.

design, Eugene directed an assault on this fortified post, and, after a sharp combat, Grenier, who commanded the assailants, carried it, with a loss to the enemy of eight hundred men. Encouraged by this success, the Viceroy made a general attack on the enemy's positions at all points. He met, however, with a severe check on his right, where General Belotti, with a brigade, was totally Sept. 8. defeated, with a loss of twelve hundred men; and his right wing, disconcerted by this disaster, fell back, closely pursued by the Austrians, towards Trieste, while the insurrection in their favour spread over the whole of Istria. The Viceroy was obliged, therefore, to remain on the defensive; but, like a skilful general, he turned it to the best advantage. Observing that Hiller had directed the weight of his forces to the sea-coast on his left, to follow up his successes in the direction of Trieste, he moved in the same direction, and succeeded, after several Sept. 15. actions, in expelling the enemy from Fiume, where General Pino established himself. So sudden was this attack, that the Archduke Maximilian, who was in the town at the time, with difficulty saved himself on board Admiral Freemantle's vessel.[1]

[1] Norvins, Port. de 1813, ii. 467. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 203, 204. Vignolles, 24, 36.

These balanced successes on either side led to no decisive result, and, after a month's active hostilities, the position of the contending parties was not materially different from what it had been at their commencement. But events were now on the wing which gave a decisive advantage to the Austrians, and threw back the Italian army behind the Adige. Large reinforcements, chiefly from the landwehr of the adjoining provinces, reached Hiller in the middle of September; he passed the Drave on the 19th of that month, and soon gained considerable advantages over the divisions of Grenier and Verdier, on the French left, in the Julian Alps. The object of this transference of active operations from the Austrian left on the sea-coast, to their right in the mountains, was soon apparent. The treaty of Ried, between the cabinet of Oct. 8.

56. The French are driven back into the plain of Friuli. Sept. 19. Sept. 21. Sept. 25.

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Vienna and that of Munich, which secured the accession of Bavaria to the alliance, again put the House of Hapsburg in possession of the great central fortress of the Tyrol, and enabled the enemy to turn the Italian valleys by their upper extremity, amidst the Alpine snows. Hiller was not slow in turning to the best account this signal advantage. Directing a considerable part of his force up the valley of the Drave, which enters the Tyrol by Prunecken; and, moving forward towards the valley of the Adige, by the bridge of Laditch, Brixen, and the scenery immortalised in the Tyrolese war,[1] he himself remained in the centre to force the fortified posts held by the enemy at Tarvis. A vigorous attack was made by Hiller in person on the position of Tarvis, from which, after several obstinate conflicts, the Viceroy was at length driven with great loss. Despairing now of maintaining his ground in the hills, Eugene withdrew his troops, not without considerable difficulty, down all the valleys, abandoning altogether the crest of the mountains, and concentrated them on the banks of the Tagliamento, at the entrance of the plain of Friuli; while, by a decree from Gorizia, he directed the levy of fifteen thousand additional conscripts, to supply the loss of an equal number who had perished by fatigue, sickness, or the sword, during this consuming warfare of posts in the Alps.[2]

Oct. 4.

[1] *Ante*, chaps. lviii. lx.

Oct. 7.

Oct. 8.

Oct. 12.

Oct. 13.

Oct. 11.

[2] Jom. iv. 497. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 209, 211. Vignolles, 37, 44.

57. General result of the campaign in the mountains.

The retreat, once commenced, could not easily be terminated. Encouraged by the accession of Bavaria, and the enthusiastic support of the Tyrolese, who crowded with shouts of joy to their standards, the Austrians pressed everywhere on his retiring columns; and it was soon evident that the line of the Adige was the only one where a stand could be made. In contemplation of that event, the garrison of Palma Nuova was strengthened by three battalions, that of Venice augmented to twelve thousand men; while, to delay as long as possible the discouragement and disaffection which he was well aware the retreat of the army would produce in Italy, the Vice-

roy determined to maintain to the last extremity the line of the Isonzo. So long was the circuit which the troops required to make by Brixen and Trent, that he was not without hope that the new levies might be brought forward before the enemy threatened Verona. But so rapid was the march of events, that this was soon found to be impossible. On the 25th September, Sept. 25. indeed, George Gifflenga, with an Italian division, had gained some advantages over the enemy, and reoccupied Brixen; but the hourly increasing strength of Oct. 15. the Germans, whose columns were now augmented by a vast concourse of volunteers from all parts of the Tyrol, soon compelled him to evacuate that town, and retreat successively by Bolzano and Lavis to Trent.[1]

[1] Vignolles, Camp. de 1813, en Italie, 52, 58. Vaud. Guerre d'Italie, 46, 54.

The latter town was next day evacuated, and its castle invested by the victorious Austrians; while the dispirited Italians retired to Volano, and the famous defiles of the Adige above Verona. Eugene, finding his rear thus threatened, felt that the line of the Isonzo was no longer tenable. Throwing garrisons, therefore, into a few forts as he retired rapidly across the Tagliamento, Oct. 23. and after sustaining a severe defeat on the part of one of his divisions at St Daniel, he arrived on the 26th at Oct. 26. Spressiano on the Piave. Meanwhile a bloody combat took place at Volano, which, after a gallant resistance, was carried by the Austrians, the Italians falling back to the still stronger and well-known position at the entrance of the pass of Serravalle. Here they were attacked next day: the Italian troops, now thoroughly discouraged, made a very feeble resistance, and were driven in utter Oct. 27. Oct. 28. disorder to the plateau of Rivoli. The recollection of Oct. 31. Napoleon's glory was unable to arrest even for a day, on this memorable spot, the rapidity of his fall; Rivoli was abandoned almost as soon as it had been occupied, and the enemy was driven back out of the hills to the very gates of Verona;[2] while two days after, the citadel

58. Entire evacuation of the Italian Tyrol. Oct. 16.

[2] Vignolles, 52, 61. Vaud. Guerre d'Italie, en 1813, 46, 54. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 214, 217.

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of Trent, after a short but active siege, surrendered with its garrison of five hundred men.

59. Concluding operations of the campaign in Italy.

This skilful operation of Hiller, in turning the French line of defence on the Piave, by the mountains, rendered a further retreat indispensable, and soon brought their standards in the plain back to the Adige. To cover this retrograde movement, which was eminently hazardous in the level country in presence of a superior and victorious

Oct. 31.

enemy, the Viceroy on the 31st made a vigorous attack on Bassano, which had fallen into the hands of the Austrians, and the situation of which, at the entrance of the Val Sugana and the defiles of the Brenta, promised to secure the army from molestation on the side where most danger was to be apprehended, and carried the place with a loss to the Austrians of eight hundred men. Thus secured, the Italian army continued its retreat across the plain from the Piave to the Adige, while the grand park of artillery was directed to Valleggio and Padua. On the 4th November the Viceroy's head-

Nov. 4.

[1] Vignolles, 73, 81. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 219, 220. Norvins, ii. 468, 469.

quarters were established at Verona; the garrisons were withdrawn from Bassano and all the posts to the eastward of that city. Finally, the campaign which had been begun on the Niemen and the Vistula, terminated on the Rhine and the Adige.[1]

60. Surrender of Trieste, and conquest of Dalmatia.

The withdrawal of the Italian troops, however, behind this river, proved fatal to the French power on the whole eastern shores of the Adriatic. General Nugent, with the left wing of the Austrian army, speedily overran the shores of the gulf of Trieste, and invested

Oct. 15.

that city in the middle of October. The operations, powerfully aided by an English squadron and auxiliary force from Sicily, were pushed with uncommon vigour; an important outwork, called the Old Powder Magazine, was carried by assault by the combined British and Austrian forces on the 22d; and the breaching batteries being then established, a most vigorous fire was kept up on the citadel, which soon produced such an effect that

the works were entirely ruined; and the place being no longer tenable, surrendered at discretion on the 31st, with twelve hundred men, and very valuable magazines. Oct. 31. Nor were the Allies less successful in Dalmatia, where the Austrian troops, powerfully assisted by an insurrection of the inhabitants on the one side, and by the British marines on the other, speedily overcame all resistance. So early as the middle of October, they Oct. 16. were masters of all the forts at the mouths of the Cattaro; a fortnight after, the town of Knin was taken by assault; ere long, the garrison of Sebenico revolted, and Oct. 30. surrendered it to the Austrians; Spalatro was taken Nov. 2. the same day, and the entire reduction of the province and eastern shores of the Adriatic effected, by the capture of the strong fortress of Zara, which capitulated, after a severe cannonade of thirteen days, to the combined Austrian and British forces on the 9th December. Dec. 9. Meanwhile Palma Nuova was besieged, and Venice invested. The strength, however, of the garrison of the latter city, which, including the marine forces, was twelve thousand strong, and the magnitude of the flotilla, mounting above three hundred guns, which defended the lagunæ and approaches to the Queen of the Adriatic, rendered its reduction a matter of time and difficulty.[1] Yet the whole Continental possessions of the old Republic, as far as the Adige, were occupied by the Austrians, whose forces extended to Ferrara and the banks of the Po.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1813, 165. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 220, 221. Vign. 94, 102.

61. Reflections on this campaign.

Such was the memorable campaign in central Europe of 1813, the most fruitful in great events, and the most momentous in its consequences, which had occurred in the annals of mankind. The armies of Cæsar or Scipio would have formed mere *corps d'armée* in its vast array; the forces of Tamerlane or Genghis-khan would have been easily dispersed by a few discharges of its stupendous artillery. Disciplined skill neither appeared there

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in miniature array as in the Grecian republics, nor barbarian valour under the guidance of unskilled energy as in the hosts of Bajazet or Attila. Civilisation and knowledge had exhausted their resources for the contest; ambition poured forth the accumulations of ages for its support; barbaric valour strained the energy of the desert for the interests it involved. The last reserves, the arrière-ban of Europe and Asia, were engaged in the struggle. On the field of battle, beside the Tartars and Bashkirs of the East, were to be seen the tender youth of Europe, only recently torn from the embraces of maternal love; in its maintenance were exhausted all that the military force of France could extort of wealth from the present sufferings of Continental Europe, and all that the industry of England had accumulated of credit during past centuries of pacific exertion. Nor were the skill and science of the leaders in this memorable struggle inferior to the prodigious forces they were called to command, or the vital interests for which they contended. The genius of Napoleon, equal to that of Cæsar or Hannibal, all but overbalanced the heroism of Alexander and the science of Gneisenau, which rivalled those of Pompey and Scipio; and the cause for which they contended was not the conquest of provinces or the plunder of cities, but the liberation of the human race from unbearable oppression, or the establishment of universal dominion upon an immoveable foundation.

62. Military ability displayed by Napoleon in this campaign.

Great as were the disasters which attended Napoleon in the course of this memorable campaign, and rapid as was the fall of his power during its continuance, it may be doubted whether he ever, on any previous occasion, displayed greater abilities, either in the general conception of his designs, or in their rapid and vigorous execution. His system of strategy was the same as it had been at Austerlitz and Jena; and, if it led to very different results, it was only because he was now opposed

in a totally different manner, and resisted with a spirit commensurate to the attack. His general ideas for the conduct of the campaign, both in its outset at Lützen and Bautzen, and in its subsequent stages, during the protracted and desperate struggle on the Elbe, were distinguished by all his usual vigour of conception and boldness of execution. And, although the obstinate tenacity with which he clung to that river, involved him latterly in the most dreadful reverses, it is the general, and seems to be the just opinion among his ablest military historians, that, situated as he was, he could not have done better ; that it was the last defensible position where the empire of Germany could be maintained; that a retreat to the Rhine, though with undiminished forces, would immediately have been attended by the defection of all the states of the Rhenish Confederacy ; and that the risks were well worth incurring, which retained one-half of Europe, in the crisis of his fate, to his standards.*

63. The skill of his tactics on the field of battle.

If Napoleon's conduct in tactics, and on the field of battle, during this campaign, is considered, it will often appear worthy of still more unqualified commendation. The admirable rapidity with which he took advantage of his central position on the Elbe, to defeat the formidable assault of the Allied sovereigns on Dresden, was equalled by the felicitous conception of the attack next day on both wings of his opponents ; a measure unlike his ordinary tactics, unlooked-for by them, and therefore the more likely to meet with decisive success : while at the same time, from the strength of the fortress in the centre, it was attended with little danger to himself.

* "The abandonment of Dresden and Saxony would have decided the defection of the princes of the Confederation of the Rhine, and enabled all the Allied armies to unite on the left bank of the Elbe; a fatal result, which would have taken away his last chance of fortune. On the other hand, by remaining on the Elbe, he had a central point which intercepted all the direct communications of the different Allied armies, and put him in a situation to take advantage of any false manœuvres they might fall into, to beat them in detail."—Boutourlin, *Camp. de* 1813, 91, 92.

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Though overwhelmed by superior numbers and a moral energy which nothing could withstand at Leipsic, the gallantry of his resistance, the heroism of his troops, are worthy of the most unreserved admiration : the more so that they wanted the stimulus of hope, the recollection of success ; and that they fought, at least on the second day, with the mournful conviction that all was lost. Much as we may admire the redoubtable conqueror who struck down his opponents with his iron gauntlet at Austerlitz and Jena, there was as much vigour and resolution displayed on the field of Bautzen, or under the walls of Dresden : the central charge at Wachau was equal to that which decided the fate of Austria at Wagram ; the daring intrepidity of the Beresina was again displayed in the forest of Hanau ; and if his opponents had been of the same mould on the Elbe that they were at Ulm or Rivoli, the destinies of the world would have been irrevocably decided in his favour on the Saxon plains.

64. The signal and inexcusable errors he committed.

Nevertheless, nothing can be more certain than that Napoleon committed the most enormous errors in the course of this campaign, and that his conduct on more than one occasion was such, that if it had occurred on the part of any of his lieutenants, he would have made them lose their heads. In fact, when we recollect that, at the resumption of hostilities in the middle of August, he had four hundred thousand combatants and twelve hundred guns concentrated under his immediate direction on the Elbe, besides three hundred thousand more who maintained the contest in Italy and Spain ;* and that,

* The warmest panegyrists of Napoleon admit this, and even estimate at a higher amount the total of the military force then at his disposal. "His military power," says Napier, "was rather broken and divided than lessened ; for it is certain that the number of men employed in 1813 was infinitely greater than in 1812. In the latter four hundred thousand, but in the former seven hundred thousand men and twelve hundred field-pieces, were engaged on different points, exclusive of the armies in Spain. Then, on the Vistula, the Oder, and the Elbe, he had powerful fortresses and numerous garrisons, or rather armies, of strength and goodness to re-establish his ascendency in Europe."—NAPIER'S *Peninsular War*, v. 431.

of this immense force, he led back only eighty thousand men and two hundred guns across the Rhine in the beginning of November, we are at a loss, at first sight, to conceive how it was possible, that in so short a time so vast a host, hitherto always victorious (save with England) in pitched battles, could have been so entirely discomfited and overthrown. The killed and wounded, and the prisoners taken in the different battles, will not explain the difficulty, for they did not amount to a third of the number ; and although the unheeded ravages of the bivouac and the hospital always cut off more than the sword of the enemy, yet this source of diminution was common to both armies, and could have made no material difference on the fortunes of either. Napoleon managed matters so, that he rendered the prizes of victory enormous beyond all parallel to the conquerors. Thirty thousand prisoners on the spot, and ninety thousand more taken in the fortresses, whom it virtually surrendered to the enemy, constituted the proud trophies of the battle of Leipsic ; and, marvellous as were the conquests which followed the thunderbolt of Jena, they were as nothing compared to those which attended the shock of that mighty field, which at one blow prostrated the French empire, and threw back the tricolor flag from the Vistula to the Rhine.

65. Dreadful results of his system of making war maintain war.

The faults in generalship committed by Napoleon during this campaign, were of such a kind, as to be inexplicable on any other supposition than that they were the necessary result and natural concomitant of his system of war, when met by a worthy and adequate spirit of resistance on the part of the enemy. We have the authority of Marshal St-Cyr for the assertion, that the light troops of the Allies, by the manner in which they cut off the foraging parties, and intercepted the communications of the French, did them more injury while on the Elbe, than they sustained in all the pitched battles put together; and the chief of Napoleon's

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engineers, General Rogniat, who had access to the whole official documents at headquarters, has stated, that he lost three hundred thousand men by *famine* in Russia in 1812, and one hundred thousand by the same cause in Saxony in 1813.* It is in this incessant wasting away, the necessary result of carrying on a campaign with such enormous multitudes of men, without any adequate magazines or support of a lasting kind, save what they could extract from the suffering population among whom they were placed,—that the real secret of the destruction of Napoleon's power is to be found. The dreadful typhus fever, which in the close of the campaign swept off such unheard-of multitudes in the fortresses on the Elbe, was the natural consequence of the unexampled privations and misery to which he reduced the gallant conscripts who crowded round his standards.

66. His enormous losses from this cause.

His panegyrists both on this and the other side of the Channel, who follow the bulletins in ascribing his ruin entirely to the rigour of the Russian winter, would do well to explain away the fact proved by the records of the War-office at Paris, that the "morning state" at Wiazma on the 3d November 1812, *four days before the frost began*, exhibited a total of somewhat above fifty-five thousand combatants and twelve thousand horses; the poor remains of three hundred thousand soldiers and eighty thousand cavalry, whom Napoleon had led in person across the Niemen.[1] It is neither, therefore, in the rigour of the elements, nor the accidents of fortune,

[1] Capef. ix. 421, 422. Chamb. i. App. No. ii. *Ante*, ch. lxxiii. §124.

* "The numerous partisans of the enemy committed frightful ravages on our rear: our depots of cavalry were obliged to fall back towards the Rhine to avoid falling into their power; many horses might have been gained to the army, if it had been possible to allow them to take a few days' repose: nothing could make up for the want of subsistence for the troops and replenishing to the parks. It may safely be affirmed, that these detached corps, as numerous as armies in the time of Turenne, commanded by officers skilled in that species of war, did more injury to Napoleon than the grand Allied armies, and were sufficient of themselves to have consummated his ruin, if he had not instantly adopted the plan of drawing near to the Rhine. The magazines were so thoroughly exhausted, that soldiers, whom a complete ration of good food could hardly have maintained in health, were reduced from the outset of the cam-

that we are to seek the real causes of Napoleon's overthrow, but in the natural consequences of his system of conquest; in the oppressive effects of the execrable maxim, that war should maintain war; and in the impatience of taxation and thirst for plunder, in the rapacious military Republic of which he formed the head; which, by throwing the armies they had on foot upon external spoliation for their support, at once exposed them, the moment the career of conquest was checked, to unheard-of sufferings, and excited unbounded exasperation among every people over whom their authority prevailed.

67. His unaccountable errors.

After making every allowance, however, for the influence of these causes, which, undoubtedly, were mainly instrumental in producing and accelerating the overthrow of the French revolutionary power, it must be admitted that there are some military errors which he committed in this campaign, which are altogether inexplicable. The destruction of Vandamme's corps, which was the beginning of his long train of disasters, was clearly owing to his imprudence in first ordering him to march on Töplitz, with thirty thousand men, to cut off the retreat of a hundred thousand, and then neglecting to support him, when engaged on his perilous mission, by the Young Guard at Pirna. His plan of commencing offensive operations by three armies at the same time, diverging from a centre at Dresden, was, to say the least of it, imprudent and hazardous; for each army

paign to half rations, and even this scanty supply was latterly often not furnished."—ST-CYR, *Histoire Militaire*, iv. 323, 324.

"From want of magazines, Napoleon suffered to die of famine, in the space of a few months, three hundred thousand men in Russia, and a hundred thousand in Saxony. The soldiers, obliged to separate in search of subsistence, in great part never rejoined their colours: all the bonds of discipline were relaxed; the troops seized every opportunity to disband; the inhabitants of the villages, exasperated by the pillage which went on, rose up and massacred the marauders; and in fine, in the midst of these disorders, the armies disappeared, or perished from misery, especially when the war was prolonged for any considerable time on the same theatre."—ROGNIAT, *Chef du Génie de* NAPOLÉON. *Art de la Guerre*, 457.

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was weakened the farther it removed from the central point; and none, in case of disaster, could afford any rapid or immediate support to the others. On leaving the Saxon capital, he deposited his reserve park of artillery and ammunition in Torgau, separated himself from his only considerable magazine on the Elbe, in Magdeburg, and left thirty-five thousand men, who might have cast the balance in his favour in the approaching decisive contest, to stand a siege in Dresden with seven days' provisions for the men and three for the horses. At Leipsic, he chose a position to fight, which had an impassable morass, traversed only by a single chaussée, in his rear, thereby violating what he himself has told us is the "first requisite for a field of battle, to have no defiles in its rear." When unable to conquer on the first day, he still clung to his ground, though the vast increase of the Allied force rendered defeat inevitable; he made no preparation whatever for retreat, and threw no bridges over the Elster, though his engineers could have erected twenty in a single night. And he perilled his crown and his empire in a conflict with greatly superior forces in that dangerous situation, when a hundred and forty thousand of his veteran soldiers were cooped up in the fortresses on the Elbe, the Oder, and the Vistula, to be the trophy of the conqueror in case of defeat.

68. The generally hazardous character of his warfare.

Inexplicable as these military errors must always appear in so sagacious and clear-sighted a general as Napoleon, they are yet, if minutely considered, nothing more than the natural and inevitable result of his system of war, when it was once thoroughly understood, and opposed with a vigour commensurate to the attack. He has himself told us, that on many previous occasions he had been in equal danger, from which he had nevertheless extricated himself not only with credit but with decisive success; and the course he pursued on those occasions had been just as perilous as that which, in 1813, proved

his ruin. In the marshes of Arcola in 1796 ; during the advance to Leoben in 1797 ; in Moravia, previous to the battle of Austerlitz, in 1805 ; in Poland, after the battle of Eylau, in 1807 ; on the Danube, after the catastrophe of Aspern, in 1809—he was in equal, if not greater peril ; and he extricated himself from the difficulties into which his imprudence had brought him, only by a happy audacity, which paralysed or divided his opponents when they had the means of destroying him absolutely within their grasp. He never thought of retreat ; he never anticipated defeat where he was in person with the army —though he provided often carefully for it in the case of his lieutenants : but, dashing boldly forward, he struck at the centre of the enemy's power, without any thought how, in case of disaster, he was to maintain his own. His own words, that "if Alexander had looked to his retreat at Arbela, or Cæsar at Pharsalia, they would never have conquered the world," reveal the ruling principle of his warfare, and explain at once his early triumphs and ultimate disasters.

69. Causes of its early success and ultimate disaster.

The wide difference at the two epochs in the result of the same audacious system of warfare, is to be ascribed in a great degree to the superior vigour and unanimity with which he was resisted in the later, to what he had been in the earlier stages of his career. It was the incomparable energy with which the people rose in arms in the latter years of the war, the concord which prevailed among the sovereigns, the perseverance with which they carried through their designs, and the disinterestedness with which they sacrificed all separate interests to the general objects of the alliance, which led to its glorious results. And without diminishing the credit due to all in this noble career, and admitting that it was on the Russian reserve that the weight of the contest in its last and most serious stages in general fell, justice must yet admit, that the chief glory of the deliverance of Germany is to be ascribed to Prussia ; and that, but for the vigour

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with which her people rose against their oppressors, and which filled the Allied ranks with a host of warriors, beyond all precedent great for the amount of its population,* the first onset of Napoleon on the banks of the Elbe never could have been resisted, and the grand alliance which effected the deliverance of Europe would never have been formed.

70. Memorable example of moral retribution which the Revolutionary war affords.

"I shall not," says Gibbon, "be readily accused of fanaticism ; yet I must admit that there are often strong appearances of retribution in human affairs." Had he lived to the present times, and witnessed the extraordinary confirmation of this truth which the Revolutionary contest afforded, his innate candour would probably have extorted a still more unqualified testimony to Supreme superintendence from the great sceptic of the eighteenth century. On the 16th October 1793, at nine o'clock in the morning, Marie Antoinette ascended the fatal scaffold, and revolutionary crime reached its highest point by the murder of a queen and a woman, the noble and unoffending daughter of the Cæsars. On that day and that hour twenty years—on the 16th October 1813—the discharge of three guns from the Allied headquarters announced the commencement of the battle of Leipsic, and the infliction of the greatest punishment on a nation which the history of mankind had exhibited. On the 19th of October 1805, revolutionary ambition beheld its greatest external triumph consummated by the surrender of Mack, with thirty thousand men, to its victorious leader on the heights

* Prussia, after its partition in 1807 by the treaty of Tilsit, possessed only 5,034,000 inhabitants. In 1813, she had 200,000 men in arms, and actually in the field, independent of the landsturm, or, as nearly as possible, one for every *twenty-five souls*. This is the largest proportion that occurred in any state resting on its own resources during the war ; for although Great Britain had 800,000 men in arms out of a population not at that period amounting to more than eighteen millions, including that of Ireland ; yet of these only 500,000 were regular soldiers and sailors, the others being local militia, who were not permanently drawn from their occupations. One in a hundred in arms is the largest proportion which any country, how warlike soever, has ever been able to keep up for any length of time.—*Ante*, Chap. LXXVI. § 20 ; and LORD CASTLEREAGH'S *Speech*, 17*th Nov.* 1813 : *Parl. Deb.*

of Ulm ; and on that day eight years—on the 19th October 1813—the final blow was struck for Germany's deliverance by the swords of the Fatherland : thirty thousand prisoners lowered their colours to the victors within the walls of Leipsic ; and the mighty conqueror, sad and dejected, was leading back his broken and defeated host to the Rhine. On the 20th October 1805, Napoleon, as the brilliant array of Austrian captives defiled before him, said to those around him, "Gentlemen, this is all well ; but I must have greater things than these—I want ships, colonies, and commerce." On the *very next day* after these memorable words were spoken, on the 21st October 1805, the united navies of France and Spain were destroyed by the arm of Nelson ; the maritime war was finished by the thunderbolt of Trafalgar ; and "ships, colonies, and commerce" had irrevocably passed over to his enemies.

71. Remarkable character of these coincidences.

Whether these marvellous coincidences were the result of accident ; of that accumulation of great events in the years of the Revolution, which rendered almost every day prolific of historic incident : or formed part of the general design of Providence for the more striking manifestation of its judgments upon the world, they are equally worthy of attention. Whatever may be thought of the coincidence of days, it was no accident which directed the march of events ; it was no casual combination of chances which led revolutionary ambition to expiate its sins on the Saxon plains ; which let fall in due season the sharpened edge of German retribution ; and at the darkest period of the contest, sank the fleets of infidelity in the deep, and righted amidst the waves the destined ark of Christian civilisation.

## CHAPTER LXXXIII.

### FORCING OF THE PYRENEES, AND INVASION OF FRANCE BY WELLINGTON.

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1. Operations in the east of Spain.

NOTHING remained after the glorious termination of the battles in the Pyrenees, to complete the expulsion, on the western frontier, of the French from the Spanish territory, but the surrender of Pampeluna; and till that event took place the British general resolved to suspend active operations. But, meanwhile, success deserted the English standards, and unwonted disgrace was incurred in the east of the Peninsula; as if to demonstrate that victory was still the reward only of persevering and resolute conduct, and to mark, by the force of contrast, what they owed to the chief who had so long apparently chained it to his chariot-wheels.

2. Expedition against Tarragona under Murray and Hallowell.

Atlas, Plate 48.

With a view to establish a good base for operations at the mouth of the Ebro, and at the same time hinder Suchet from despatching any succour to resist the general offensive movement which he was meditating in the north-west of the Peninsula, Wellington directed Sir John Murray, early in May, to embark the great bulk of his troops at Alicante, and attempt a descent near Tarragona; in the hope either of regaining that fortress, or, at all events, of drawing Suchet back for its defence from his advanced position on the Xucar, and withdrawing the beautiful and fertile province of Valencia from the imperial domination. To aid him in its reduction, a

powerful battering train of fifty guns was placed at his disposal; and as Admiral Hallowell, with a squadron of the Mediterranean fleet was at hand, both to facilitate the disembarkation and aid in the operations, it was hoped they would prove successful, before an adequate French force could be collected from beyond the Ebro to raise the siege. The troops placed at Murray's disposal for this purpose were very considerable, consisting of the British and foreign divisions which had come from Sicily, Whittingham's and Roche's Spaniards, and the most efficient part of Elio's and the Duc del Parque's armies. But the first only were to be embarked for Catalonia; the latter being left to threaten the French positions covering Valencia on the Xucar. The forces embarked at Alicante were somewhat above fourteen thousand, of which eight thousand were British and German foot, and fifteen hundred British and German cavalry and artillery; the remainder being Spanish and Sicilian infantry.[1]*

[1] Wellington's instructions to Murray, April 14, 1813. Gur. x. 297. State, 17th June 1813. Nap. vi. 704.

3. First operations against Tarragona, which are successful.

This army embarked at Alicante on the 31st May, and arrived with a fair wind in the neighbourhood of Tarragona on the 3d June, where it was immediately landed by the active co-operation of Admiral Hallowell, the intrepid captain of the Swiftsure at the Nile.[2] They had thus entirely gained the start of Suchet, who could not possibly be up for ten days to come, for he had a hundred and sixty miles to march; and meanwhile the besiegers, with the ample means at their disposal, might make themselves masters of Tarragona, the works of which were in a very dilapidated state, and which was defended by only sixteen hundred men. Fort Olivo, the scene of such desperate conflicts during the former siege,[3] was occupied, as well as the heights of Loretto, without resistance, the first day. An expedition was at the same time despatched under Colonel Prevost to attack San Felippe de Balaguer, a strong fort perched

[2] *Ante*, ch. xxvi. § 58.

June 3.

[3] *Ante*, ch. lxv. § 73, 74.

* See Appendix, A, Chap. LXXXIII.

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on a rock, which commanded and blocked up the only carriage-road from Tortosa to Tarragona: and the fire of two mortars, which were with great difficulty brought up to bear on the fort, having blown up its magazine, the governor surrendered at discretion, with two hundred and sixty men. This early success greatly elevated the spirits of the Allied army, and they confidently anticipated the immediate capture of the main fortress; for its outworks, incomplete, ill-flanked, without palisades or casemates, could not have withstood a vigorous attack; and once taken, a few hours' breaching with the noble battering train which they possessed, would have brought down the wall of the town, and a general assault might have been made with every prospect of success.[1]

June 6. [1] Nap. vi. 14, 15. Murray's Official Despatch, 9th June 1813. Gur. x. 482.

4. Murray delays the assault, and is obliged to raise the siege.

But the leader is the soul of an army, and no valour or skill on the part of the officers and men employed, can supply the want of resolute determination on the part of the general-in-chief. There is no reason to doubt the personal courage of Sir John Murray; but he proved himself destitute of the rarer qualities of firm resolution, moral courage, and confidence in his followers, which are indispensable in a commander. His troops were brave; and such was the spirit with which they were animated, that an Italian regiment which at Alicante had been ready to go over to the enemy, now volunteered to head the assault on Fort-Royal. But the general was far from sharing the confidence of his followers; he had despaired of victory even in the moment of glorious triumph at Castalla, and he was not likely to be more sanguine when in front of the bastions of Tarragona. The operations were by no means pushed with the rapidity which circumstances required, and the ample means at his disposal rendered practicable. The guns, though close at hand, were not put into the batteries till the

June 11.

11th; and though the order to assault the outworks was given that night, it was countermanded: instructions for embarking the guns were given, and, when half executed,

likewise countermanded. Thus the precious time, when the place might have been carried, was lost in irresolution; and meanwhile intelligence of the approach of formidable bodies to raise the siege, completed the embarrassment of the English general. On the 11th, eight thousand French under Maurice Mathieu, began their march from Barcelona, and intelligence was received that Suchet was approaching the Col de Balaguer from Valencia with nine thousand more, driving before him Copons' mountain bands, who had drawn into the neighbourhood of Tarragona. Murray had twenty thousand men, whereof one-half were British and Germans, on whom reliance could be placed; but instead of pushing the siege with this respectable force, which would have taken the place before either army could have got up, the English general gave orders for the embarkation of the troops and battering train. It began on the 12th, and was not completed till next day, when the French had not yet arrived even within sight of Tarragona. The soldiers and sailors could not conceal their indignation at abandoning the guns, nineteen in number, which were left in the advanced batteries—for they were part of the time-honoured train which had torn down the ramparts of Badajoz.[1]*

[1] Murray's Official Despatch, June 14, 1813. Gurw. x. 486. Nap. vi. 19, 21. Tor. v. 294, 295. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 259, 260.

5. The army returns to Alicante, and Lord W. Bentinck assumes the command.

After the troops had got on board, Murray disembarked part of them near Balaguer, in hope of cutting off a French brigade which lay there; but, finding it had escaped, he again put to sea, and steered for Alicante, while Copons retired with his Spaniards into the mountains, and the French entered Tarragona amidst the

* Murray after this disaster was deprived of the command, and, when he returned to England, was brought to a court-martial after the peace, which acquitted him of the serious charges preferred against him for his conduct on the occasion, but found him guilty of want of judgment. There was no harm in this; vindictive prosecutions are of no service in military affairs: it is the judgment of posterity which is the real reward or punishment of public conduct. Sir John was a man of talent, and had many estimable qualities in private: the fault lay in his appointment to a public situation for which he was wholly disqualified.

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shouts of the garrison. Soon afterwards Lord William Bentinck arrived from Sicily, and took the command. A violent storm, which overtook the fleet and wrecked some of the transports, prevented the soldiers being all disembarked before the 27th; and meanwhile, Elio and the Duc del Parque, with twenty-five thousand men, attacked, in two columns, Habert, who with nine thousand maintained the line of the Xucar; but they were defeated at both their points of attack with the loss each of some hundred men. Thus everything seemed disastrous on the eastern coast; and, to complete the untoward state of affairs, Lord William Bentinck had come alone from Sicily, fearing a descent from Murat in that island; although, after having entered into secret negotiations with the Allies, he soon after set out for Saxony, where, as already mentioned, he bore an important part in the battle of Dresden.[1]

[1] Tor. v. 296, 299. Suchet's Mém. ii. 324, 326. Nap. vi. 40, 41. Duc de Feltre to Suchet, May 18, 1813. Suchet, ii. 324.

6. Retreat of Suchet behind the Ebro after the battle of Vitoria.

But the triumphs of the French were not of long duration. On the 27th, intelligence was received of the battle of Vitoria, accompanied by orders, which were a necessary consequence of that event, for Suchet entirely to evacuate Valencia, and retire behind the Ebro. He immediately made preparations for abandoning the province, and left Valencia with a heavy heart on the 5th July, which was entered four days afterwards by Lord William Bentinck. But, faithful to the positive instructions of Napoleon to keep a tenacious grasp of all his conquests, he left twelve hundred men in Saguntum, five hundred in Peniscola, and four thousand five hundred in Tortosa—a fatal error, the counterpart of the Emperor's obstinate retention of the fortresses on the Elbe and the Oder during the German campaign, and to which, more than to any other cause, the little subsequent success of Suchet in the field is to be ascribed. It was Suchet's first intention, when he retired behind the Ebro, to have marched upon Saragossa, and, forming a respectable force with the troops left in that province, to have united with

July 9.

Clausel, and together threatened the right flank of Wellington. But the rapid retreat of Clausel from Saragossa, by Jaca, into France, totally disconcerted this well-conceived project. The plain of Aragon being entirely inundated with guerillas, while Wellington's masses in Navarre were on its flank, he felt it necessary to concentrate his forces in Catalonia and on the Lower Ebro, and, accordingly, gave orders for the evacuation of Saragossa and the fortresses of Aragon, the troops retiring to Mequinenza, Lerida, and Tortosa.[1]

[1] Suchet, ii. 324, 326. Nap. vi. 40. Tor. v. 296, 298.

7. Bentinck follows him to the Lower Ebro.

Bentinck followed with the Anglo-Sicilian army; but it was soon found by the British general that, though his forces were of considerable numerical amount, yet they were not of such a composition as to enable him to hazard offensive operations without the utmost caution beyond the Ebro. He had, indeed, thirty thousand men nominally under his orders; but of these the British and Germans, not quite ten thousand strong, could alone be trusted in presence of the enemy. Elio and Roche, with ten thousand more, were at Valencia in a very destitute condition; the Duc del Parque, with twelve thousand, was several marches in the rear; and his troops, though paid by British subsidies, were, from the inherent vice of procrastination common to all the Spaniards, almost as unprovided as the former. Decaens, however, at this moment was himself in nearly as difficult a situation; for the news of the battle of Vitoria had again roused all the upper valleys of Catalonia; and the insurrection, nourished by supplies from the English fleet, was making rapid progress. Thus neither party were in a condition to undertake any operation of importance; and though Suchet had sixty-eight thousand of the best troops of the empire at his command, they were so scattered over the numerous fortified posts and cities which the Emperor had ordered him to garrison and maintain, that he was little more than a match in the field for Bentinck with his motley array of thirty thousand.[2]

[2] Suchet, ii. 328, 334. Nap. vi. 44, 49. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 262, 263.

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8. Extraordinary magnitude of the French contributions in Valencia, which are brought to light by this retreat.

The evacuation of Aragon and Valencia, like that of all the other places which had been under the dominion of the French armies, revealed the extraordinary system of forced contributions and organised plunder, by which they had so long succeeded in maintaining their ascendency in Europe without any sensible addition to the burdens of France itself. Immediately after the occupation of Valencia in the end of 1811, the French marshal, as already mentioned, had imposed an extraordinary concontribution of 200,000,000 reals, or about £2,000,000 sterling, a burden equal, if the value of money be taken into consideration, to at least £5,000,000 in Great Britain. The half of this enormous requisition entirely exhausted the whole money, gold, silver plate, and jewels of the province, and the remainder was taken in grain, stuffs, clothing, and other articles necessary for the subsistence of the troops. Next year the burden was fixed at 70,000,000 reals, or £700,000, equal in like manner to £1,750,000 in England; but by the vigour of the French marshal's government, and the regularity and justice of his rule in the distribution and exaction of these enormous burdens, nearly the whole was brought, chiefly in kind, into the imperial treasury.[1]

[1] Suchet, ii. 290, 296, Tor. v. 304, 305.

9. And in Aragon.

Aragon at first, after the capture of its capital, had been subjected to enormous burdens, great part of which was irrecoverable from their excessive magnitude; but from the time that the regular government of Suchet began, the impositions were more uniform, and amounted to about four times what the province had paid in the most flourishing days of the old monarchy. While these facts illustrate in the clearest manner the oppressive nature of the imperial government, and explain the unbounded exasperation which it everywhere excited in Europe, as well as the long enthusiasm which it awakened in France itself, it must at the same time be added, to the honour of Marshal Suchet, that he carried this onerous system into execution with far more attention to the interests

and wishes of the inhabitants than any of the other French marshals. No private plunder disgraced his footsteps, no military disorders rendered hateful his government. Unlike the other parts of Spain, the monuments of the fine arts remained untouched in Valencia during his administration; and, despite the grievous weight of the burdens he was obliged to impose, such was the protection to industry which he simultaneously afforded, that the receding of the footsteps of the French army was beheld with regret by the grateful inhabitants.[1]

[1] Suchet, ii. 290, 293, and i. 279, 314. Tor. v. 304, 306.

10. Bentinck besieges Tarragona, and is compelled to raise the siege.

Bentinck long hesitated whether he should commence active operations in Catalonia with the siege of Tortosa or that of Tarragona; but he at length determined on the latter, chiefly in consequence of the facilities for carrying it on which the vicinity of the sea and the Mediterranean squadron afforded. Having crossed the Ebro, accordingly, he sat down before the place in the end of July with ten thousand good troops; while the Spanish armies, about twenty thousand more, but of a very different quality, were drawn to the neighbourhood to cover the siege. Suchet was long unable to collect any sufficient force to interrupt his operations; but having at length formed a junction with Decaens, he advanced at the head of thirty thousand men to raise the siege. Bentinck was at the head of an equal force, but upon the Spaniards no reliance could be placed; and he therefore wisely declined battle, retreating to the defiles of the Hospitalat, near the Col de Balaguer. Suchet, without pursuing him, passed on to Tarragona, which he entered on the 18th, and immediately blew up the fortifications and brought away the garrison. Such was the strength of the ancient masonry, the work of the Romans, that it was with no small time and labour that the demolition was effected. Having destroyed these renowned bastions, the French general retired to the neighbourhood of Villa Franca and the Llobregat, while Decaens was sent into Upper Catalonia;[2] and Tarragona, with its ruined battle-

Aug. 15.

Aug. 18.

[2] Nap. vi. 50, 54. Tor. v. 328, 331. Suchet, ii. 334. 338.

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ments and fertile fields, was occupied by the British forces.

1813.

11. Unfortunate combat at the pass of Ordal.

Gradually after this the British army gained ground, and the French were cooped up into more contracted limits within the war-wasted province of Catalonia. On the 5th September, the advance entered Villa Franca, and Suchet retired altogether into the Llobregat, leaving Tortosa, Lerida, and Mequinenza, now blockaded by the Spanish troops, to their own resources. An event, however, ere long occurred, which showed that it was not without reason that Bentinck, with his heterogeneous array of troops, had hitherto avoided a general engagement with the admirable veterans of Suchet. On the 12th September, twelve hundred German and British infantry, with two British and two Spanish guns, under Colonel Adam, and three battalions of Sarsfield's Catalonians, occupied, twelve miles in advance of Villa Franca, the position of Ordal, a ridge which rises gradually from a deep and impassable ravine, crossed by a noble bridge in front. Suchet, hearing that this advanced guard, not more in all than three thousand men, was not adequately supported, conceived the design of cutting it off. For this purpose the divisions Harispe and Habert were put in motion at nightfall, by bright moonlight passed the bridge without resistance, and at midnight suddenly attacked the Allied advanced guard at all points. The second battalion of the 27th, who were on the right, were first assaulted; but the men, who were lying beside their muskets in battle array, instantly started up and fought fiercely; and the Spaniards and Germans, who were next attacked in the centre, made a most gallant resistance. Harispe's men, however, crossing the bridge in great numbers, ere long turned the Allied flank; Adam was wounded early; Colonel Reeves, who was second in command, was also soon struck down; and amidst the confusion of a nocturnal combat, the troops, without any recognised leader,[1] fought with great fury in detached

Sept. 12.

[1] Bentinck's Official Account, Gurw. xi. 147, 148. Suchet, ii. 341, 343. Nap. vi. 57, 59. Tor. v. 331, 332.

bodies, but without any general plan. At length the Spaniards in the centre were broken, the 27th regiment turned and forced, and the whole dispersed, four guns being taken. Captain Waldron, with eighty of the 27th, and Captain Muller, with the like number of Germans, effected their retreat by the hills ; but all the rest were dispersed or slain, and the actual loss was not less than a thousand men.

12. The Allies retire to Tarragona.

Encouraged by this blow, which seems to have been induced by undue confidence on the part of both Bentinck and Adam, in thus exposing an advanced guard without support to the blows of superior bodies of the enemy, Suchet pursued his march, and came up at eight o'clock with the main Allied army near Villa Franca. But they retreated in admirable order, and a charge of the French cavalry was stopped with remarkable resolution by Lord Frederick Bentinck, at the head of the 28th dragoons and German horse. That gallant officer engaged in single combat and wounded Colonel Myers of the French horse, and defeated the cavalry with the loss of three hundred men. Great numbers of the missing at the pass of Ordal, who had been supposed to be taken, rejoined their colours two days afterwards ; but this disaster had the effect of causing the Allied army to retire to the neighbourhood of Tarragona, while the Catalonians fell back to Igualada. Although the operations in the east of Spain were thus checkered with misfortune, yet they had a most important effect on the issue of the campaign, and clearly demonstrated on what erroneous principles Napoleon's defensive system of retaining garrisons in so many fortresses was founded. For during a period when Soult was pressed by superior forces in the western Pyrenees, and France itself was menaced with invasion, sixty-eight thousand of the best soldiers of the French empire were kept in check by ten thousand British and German troops, supported by twice that number of ill-disciplined Spaniards;[1] all pressure on Wellington's right

Sept. 13.

[1] Suchet, ii. 342, 345. Bentinck's Official Account, Sept. 15. 1813. Gurw. xi. 147, 148. Nap. vii. 57, 59. Tor. v. 342, 333. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 306, 310.

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flank from that formidable body was prevented, and the whole of Valencia and half of Catalonia were rescued from their grasp by a motley array, which could not for three days have kept the field in presence of Suchet's united forces.

13. Reasons which at this period induced Wellington to desire not to invade France.

Meanwhile Wellington, having completed his preparations, and received considerable reinforcements both from England and the hospitals, from whence the wounded men were discharged in such extraordinary numbers, and with such rapidity, under the influence of the mental excitement produced by continued and glorious success,* as to excite the astonishment of the whole army, was taking measures for an invasion of France. He was desirous, indeed, not to hazard that attempt at the present moment, for several reasons :—Pampeluna, though again closely blockaded, and now severely distressed for provisions, had not yet fallen ; and till that event took place, not only could the blockading forces not be reckoned on to support the Allied army in its advance, but he himself could not be considered as solidly established on the Spanish frontier. The Spanish troops who were acting in co-operation with his army, were fully forty thousand, and they had now acquired, from having served for some time with the Anglo-Portuguese forces, a far higher degree of consistence and efficiency than they had ever before attained during the war. But still there were many circumstances in their condition which rendered them likely to prove at least as dangerous as serviceable to an invading army.[1]

[1] Gurw. xi. 56, 57, and 172, 200. Wellington to Spanish Minister at War, Aug. 30, 1813.

In spite of all the representations of Wellington, which had been as energetic as they were innumerable, the

* "We have gained on the strength of the 76th, 84th, and 85th regiments, 1797 rank and file, and 800 recruits; and 500 British and 1500 Portuguese from the hospitals last week, and we are gaining some every day. We are now as strong as we were on the 25th July, before the battles of the Pyrenees, and in a short time we shall be within 5000 or 6000 as strong as we were before the battle of Vitoria. The troops are uncommonly healthy, indeed there is no sickness amongst them."—WELLINGTON *to* LORD BATHURST, *25th August* 1813 ; GURWOOD, xi. 45.

1813.

14. The total inefficiency of the government at Cadiz was the principal one.

government at Cadiz, wholly engrossed with democratic ambition, had taken no efficient steps to provide for their armies. They were neither clothed nor paid, and in great part depended for their subsistence upon the British rations; and there was too good reason to fear, that if they entered France they would rouse a national resistance, by the license with which they might retaliate upon its inhabitants the misery which their own countrymen had so long suffered at the hands of the enemy. The Cortes, inflamed almost to madness by the incessant efforts of the republican press at Cadiz, who now dreaded nothing so much as the success of the Allied arms, did all in their power to thwart the designs of Wellington for the common cause. The excesses at San Sebastian afforded too plausible a ground, which was amply taken advantage of, for inflaming the popular passions against the English general; they were represented as not the designless work of the unbridled soldiers, but as the deliberate attempt of a heretical nation to destroy a mercantile community, of which they were jealous. Wellington himself was openly accused of aspiring to the crown of Spain: his character was too great, his achievements had been too glorious, not to excite the most vehement envy among all the base of the realm he had delivered.* To such a height did these malignant recriminations rise, that he more than once offered to resign the supreme command;† and, despairing of success with such lukewarm or treacherous allies, advised the British government to demand San Sebastian as a hostage, and, if refused, to withdraw their forces altogether from the Peninsula.[1]

[1] Wellington to the Spanish Minister at War, Aug. 30, 1813. Gurw. xi. 56, 57; to Lord Bathurst, Sept. 5, 1813. Ibid. xi. 90, 91; and xi. 172, 200; xi. 327, 349.

* "Nec minus periculi, ex magnâ famâ, quam ex malâ."—Tacitus. Envy is a passion second only in extent to selfishness, to which it is twin brother in human nature, and its effects are far more general than is commonly supposed.

† "More than half of Spain has been cleared of the enemy above a year; and the whole of Spain, excepting Catalonia and a small part of Aragon, since the months of May and June last. The most abundant harvest has been reaped in all parts of the country; millions of money, spent by contending armies in the Peninsula, are circulating everywhere; and yet your armies, however weak in numbers, are literally starving. The Allied British and Portuguese

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15. By desire of the British government he undertakes it.

Although the British government were far from being insensible to the cogency of these arguments, yet they wisely determined to follow Wellington's advice, in cautiously abstaining from all interference with the Regency and Cortes at Cadiz, how criminal or absurd soever their conduct might be, and to bend all their efforts to the vigorous prosecution of the war. But they were induced, by other considerations of still higher importance, to urge their general to undertake the immediate invasion of the south of France. The coalition in Germany, they were well aware, was still very nearly matched by Napoleon; the disasters at Dresden had wellnigh dissolved its heterogeneous materials; and therefore so important an event as the invasion of France by the British forces, might be expected to produce a moral effect of the greatest importance throughout Europe. Wellington, who at that period

army under my command, have been subsisted—particularly latterly—almost exclusively upon the magazines imported by sea; and I am concerned to inform your Excellency, that besides money for the pay of all the armies, which has been given from the military chest of the British army, and has been received from no other quarter, the British magazines have supplied quantities of provisions to all the Spanish armies, in order to enable them to remain in the field at all; and, notwithstanding this assistance, I have had the mortification of seeing the Spanish troops on the outposts obliged to plunder the nut and apple trees for subsistence; and to know that the Spanish troops, employed in the blockade of Pampeluna and Santona, were starving upon half an allowance of bread, while the enemy whom they were blockading were, at the same time, receiving their full allowance.

"It cannot be pretended that the country does not produce the means of maintaining the number of men necessary for its defence; those means are undoubtedly superabundant; and the enemy has proved that armies can be maintained in Spain, at the expense of the Spanish nation, infinitely longer than are necessary for its defence.

"Sir, the fact is notorious, that there is no authority in the country to enforce the law and the due payment of the contributions to government; and the officers of the Hacienda do not perform their duty.

"They are infinitely more numerous than is necessary, and their maintenance exhausts the revenues which ought to be employed in the maintenance of the troops on the frontiers. I have sent to your Excellency's office proofs that some branches of the revenue cost 70 and 80 per cent to collect them.

"It must be obvious to your Excellency that matters cannot go on long as they are. The winter is approaching, and no magazines, or other provision of any kind, have been made for the Spanish troops, who, as I have above stated, have not at present even enough for their daily subsistence."—WELLINGTON *to the Spanish Minister at War, 30th August* 1813; GURWOOD, vol. xi. pp. 56, 58.

"Our character is involved in a greater degree than we are aware of in the

had little confidence in the stability of the Grand Alliance, and looked, not without reason, to the security of the Peninsula as the main object of his efforts, was desirous that his troops, or a principal part of them, should be turned against Suchet in Catalonia, in order that, during the absence of Napoleon with the greater part of his forces in Germany, the important strongholds in that province, an effectual barrier against France in the east, might be recovered to the Spanish monarchy. But the English government, having in view the general interests of Europe, and the probable effect of the measure on the determination of the Allied Sovereigns on the Elbe, decided otherwise. The invasion of France, even before Pampeluna had fallen, was resolved on; and Wellington, like a good soldier, set himself to execute, to the best of his ability, an offensive campaign, which on military principles he deemed premature.[1]

[1] Nap. vi. 239, 246. Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Gurw. xi. 132, 176.

democratical transactions of the Cortes, in the opinion of all moderate and well-thinking Spaniards, and, I am afraid, with the rest of Europe; and if the mob of Cadiz begin to move heads from shoulders, as the newspapers have threatened Castanos, and the assembly seize upon landed property to supply their necessities, I am afraid we must do something more than discountenance them.

"It is quite impossible that such a system can last. What I regret is, that I am the person that maintains it. If I was out of the way, there are plenty of generals who would overturn it. Ballasteros positively intended it; and I am much mistaken if O'Donnell, and even Castanos, and probably others, are not equally ready. If the King should return, he also will overturn the whole fabric, if he has any spirit; but things have gone so far, and the gentlemen of Cadiz are so completely masters of their trade of managing that assembly, that I am afraid there must be another convulsion; and I earnestly recommend to the British government to keep themselves clear of the democracy, and to interfere in nothing while the government is in their hands, excepting in carrying on the war, and keeping out the foreign enemy."—WELLINGTON *to* EARL BATHURST, *5th Sept.* 1813; GURWOOD, vol. xi. pp. 90, 91.

"In consequence of the existing regency of Spain having departed from all the engagements entered into with me by the late regency after repeated personal discussions, and notwithstanding that I had received what I conceived was a confirmation of the engagements, and a declaration to adhere to them by the existing regency, I thought it proper, on the 30th August last, to resign the command of the Spanish armies, which resignation I have been informed by a despatch from the Minister at War of the 22d of September, has been accepted by the regency, and I continue to exercise the command only till the new Cortes shall have been assembled."—WELLINGTON *to* EARL BATHURST, *5th October* 1813; GURWOOD, vol. xi. p. 164.

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16. Description of the French position on the Bidassoa.

Soult's position on the northern side of the Bidassoa consisted of the base of a triangle, of which Bayonne was the apex, and the great roads running from thence to Irun on the sea-coast, and St Jean Pied-de-Port in the interior, were the sides. The interior of this triangle was filled with a mass of rugged and in great part inaccessible mountains, affording little means of subsistence to troops, and presenting at every step huge cliffs and passes capable of arresting an invading army. The French army was stationed on the summit of the southern ridge of this wild and rocky district, which immediately overlooks the valley of the Bidassoa, and various parts of it were strengthened with field-works. The summit of the Rhune mountain—the highest part of the ridge, terminating in a peak, surrounded on three sides by inaccessible precipices, and to be reached only from the eastward by a long narrow shelve on the top of the rocks—was crowned with a complete redoubt. All the hill-roads which penetrated through this strong position were commanded by works, the greater part of which were nearly completed; and the position, flanked by the sea on the one side, and by the Rhune mountain, which rises to the height of two thousand eight hundred feet, and overlooks all the neighbouring hills, on the other, could hardly be turned on either side.[1]

[1] Nap. vi. 246, 247. Belm. i. 266. Gurw. xi. 176.

17. Amount of the force which Soult had in this position.

Wellington, nevertheless, determined to hazard an attack, and he first intended to have made it in the middle of September, immediately after the castle of San Sebastian fell; but the excessive storms of rain which afterwards came on, and swelled the Bidassoa into a raging torrent, rendered it impossible to attempt the crossing of the fords till the beginning of October; and the state of the tides, upon which the threading through them was mainly dependent, would not permit the passage being attempted till the 7th of that month. Soult, not expecting that Wellington would attempt to force his strong position in this quarter, had not above fifteen

thousand men immediately above the Bidassoa; as in truth he did not regard the heights in front as the principal part of his position. It was in the fortifications on the Nive in their rear that the principal strength of the position lay, by which he hoped to prevent the invasion of the south of France. The French general had recently been joined by sixteen thousand new conscripts, who were distributed among the veteran corps of the army; so that his numerical force was little inferior to what it had been before the battles of the Pyrenees. But this accession of force was fully counterbalanced on the Allied side by the arrival of three thousand fresh troops from England, and the approach of the Andalusian army of reserve under the Conde d'Abisbal, fully twelve thousand strong, which bore an important part in the action that followed.[1]

[1] Belm. i. 266, 267. Soult to the Minister at War at Paris, Oct. 26, 1813. Ibid. 692, 694. Nap. vi. 246, 252. Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Oct. 9, 1813. Gurw. xi. 176.

18. Wellington's dispositions for forcing the passage.

The troops which Wellington employed in the attack were very considerable, and proportioned rather to the strength of the enemy's position, than to the actual force he had at his command to defend it. Graham, having with him the first and fifth divisions, Lord Aylmer's brigade, and a brigade of Portuguese, commanded the left wing, and received orders to cross the Bidassoa by the fords immediately above and below the site where the bridge on the great road from Paris to Madrid formerly stood; Freyre, with his Spaniards, was to cross by the Biratu fords, and storm the intrenched camp on the heights above them; Major-General Alten, with the light division and Longa's Spaniards, was to cross the upper fords, and attack the Bayonette mountain and the pass of Vera; while on the right the army of reserve of Andalusia, under the command of General Giron, was to attack the enemy's posts on the mountain of La Rhune, while the fourth and sixth divisions were in reserve to support him, if necessary.[2]* Altogether, the English general directed twenty-four

[2] Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Oct. 9, 1813, Gurw. xi. 176. Murray's general orders, in Wyld's Memoirs, 129, 130, 133.

* See Appendix, B, Chap. LXXXIII.

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thousand men against the Lower Bidassoa, and twenty thousand against the Rhune mountain and its adjacent ridges.

19. Commencement of the attack. Oct. 8.

The night preceding the attack was unusually stormy and tempestuous. A thunder-storm rolled down from the summit of the Rhune mountain, and broke with the utmost violence on the French positions on the Lower Bidassoa. During the darkness and storm, Wellington advanced a number of his guns up to the heights of San Marcial, while the troops and pontoons were brought down, still unperceived, close to Fontarabia and Irun, at the mouth of the Bidassoa. At the same time the columns which were to cross over farther up, moved close to the respective points of passage, which were no less than ten in number, in order to be able simultaneously to commence the attack on the French position. All the tents of the Allied army on the hills were left standing, and the pontoons, which had been brought down to the water's edge, were carefully concealed from the enemy's view. At seven o'clock Lord Aylmer's brigade, which led the advance on the left extremity of the left wing, suddenly emerged from behind their screen of hills, and advanced with a rapid pace towards the sands adjoining Fontarabia, and immediately all the guns on the heights of San Marcial commenced their fire along the whole line. So completely were the enemy taken by surprise, that Marshal Soult was passing troops in review in the centre of his position, at the moment when the first guns were heard at the Lower Bidassoa.[1]

[1] Gurw. xi. 177. Nap. vi. 254. Pellot, 54, 57.

20. Forcing of the French lines.

He immediately set out at the gallop in that direction; but before he could arrive in its vicinity, the positions had been carried, and the British were solidly established in the French territory. From the summit of San Marcial seven columns could be seen descending rapidly from the heights, and advancing with beautiful precision and a rapid step towards the fords of the Bidassoa. Those on the upper parts of the stream descended at once into the

enemy's fire; but those on the lower wound like huge snakes through the level sands, and were in some places almost immersed in water before they reached the firm ground on the opposite side. But the surprise was complete, and the enemy on the heights opposite made no very strenuous resistance. Several redoubts on the sand-hills were taken, and seven pieces of cannon captured. A much more obstinate resistance was made, however, at the mountain of Louis the Fourteenth, and the heights of the Croix des Bouquets, which was the key to the whole position in that quarter, and towards which both parties brought up their troops and guns with the greatest rapidity. The Germans, who first made the attack on this point, were repulsed with severe loss; but the 9th regiment, under Colonel Cameron, at this moment came up, and stormed the post with the utmost gallantry; the French falling back at all points, and in great confusion, on the high-road towards Bayonne; and it was only by the arrival of Soult at this moment, with the reserve and several guns, that order was in part restored. Meanwhile Freyre had also carried the camp of Biratu after a hard struggle.[1]

[1] Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Oct. 9, 1813. Gurw. xi. 177. Nap. vi. 254, 258. Subaltern, 94, 104. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 283. Pellot, 57, 58.

21. The French are driven from their position on the left.

While this rapid and important success was achieved on the left, Alten, with the light division, having forded the river, attacked the enemy's intrenchments in the pass of Vera; and Giron, with the Andalusians, was led against the mountain of La Rhune. Taupin's division guarded the stupendous rocks in front of the Allies which were to be assailed; while the sixth division, under Cole, which was posted on the heights of St Barbara, formed an imposing reserve, full in view of the French troops, and ready to co-operate at a moment's warning in the attack. The French soldiers in this quarter were posted on the summit of enormous rocky ridges, one of which, called by the soldiers the Boar's Back, projected like a huge redoubt far into the valley of Beira. No sooner, however, did Clausel, who commanded there, hear the first cannon-

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shots on the Lower Bidassoa, than he hurried four regiments up to the summit of the Great Rhune, and advanced with the remainder of his forces to the support of Taupin on the ridges beneath. But before he could arrive, the action in that quarter was decided. Soon after seven o'clock, the Boar's Back was assailed at both ends; at its eastern extremity—that is, on the British right—by Giron's Andalusians, and on its left, towards the British centre, by Kempt's brigade; whilst Colonel Colborne, at the head of his brigade, consisting of the 52d, 95th, and some Portuguese battalions of light troops, advanced against the Bayonette mountain on the British left. Ere long the slopes of the mountains were covered with men and fire, while the dark forests at the bottom of the ravines were filled with volumes of white smoke, that came curling up out of their inmost recesses. The Boar's Back was soon carried, and the troops then rushed on to the assault of the interior range, consisting of the Bayonette mountain and the pass of Vera.[1]

[1] Gurw. xi. 177, 179. Nap. vi. 264, 266. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 283, 284.

22. The Boar's Back and Great Rhune are carried.

The Portuguese Caçadores were the first who made the attack; but they were overmatched by the French, who, rushing out of the redoubt at the summit, hurled them over the rocky slopes with great violence. In the middle, however, of their pursuit, the 52d regiment suddenly emerged from the wood, and startled the victorious French by the apparition of the red uniforms. At this sight the pursuers wavered and fled, closely followed by the British regiment, who entered the redoubt with them. Following up his success, Colborne next attacked the second intrenchment, which was carried with equal impetuosity, and four hundred prisoners were taken. Meanwhile Giron's Spaniards, on the right, had also worked their way with great difficulty up the eastern end of the Boar's Back, and stormed some intrenchments which the enemy had thrown up in that quarter on the Saddle Ridge beyond it. They were repulsed, however, in the attack of the strong position of the Hermitage on

the Great Rhune mountain, from the summit of which the enemy rolled down immense rocks, which made huge gaps in the assailing companies. On this rugged height the French succeeded in maintaining themselves all night; but as soon as the mist had cleared away on the following morning, Wellington directed an attack by Giron's Spaniards by the eastern ridge, which alone was accessible. This important and difficult operation was performed with the utmost gallantry by the Andalusians, who drove the enemy from one fortified post in the rugged slopes to another, till the Great Rhune itself was in a manner environed by enemies. Clausel upon this, fearful of being cut off, drew off his regiments from that elevated position in the night; and on the following morning the whole ridge occupied by the enemy, from the summit of La Rhune to the sea-coast, was in the hands of the Allies.[1]

[1] Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Oct. 9, 1813. Gurw. xi. 177, 178. Nap. vi. 264, 267. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 283, 284. Pellot, 60. 61. Tor. v. 364, 366.

Though not so celebrated as some of his other achievements, there is none which reflects more lustre on Wellington as a general than this extraordinary action. With assiduous care, the French had for more than a month fortified their mountain position in the Pyrenees; it was guarded by an army as numerous, so far as the regular troops on either side were concerned, as that of the British general; and the heights on which the French were placed, far exceeded the far-famed steeps of Torres Vedras in strength and ruggedness. From this all but impregnable position they had been driven, in a single day, by an enemy who, to reach it, had to ford a difficult and dangerous river, forming, as it were, a vast wet ditch to the intrenchment. Great as was the spirit evinced by the whole troops, Spanish as well as British or Portuguese, who had been engaged, it was not by their efforts alone that the battle was won. It was the combinations of the general which rendered their attacks irresistible. It was the secrecy of his preparations, and the suddenness of his onset, which carried the enemy's position on the Lower

23. Reflections on this battle.

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Bidassoa. It was the admirable combinations which threw an overwhelming force against the rocks in the centre, which won the dizzy heights of La Rhune. In defence of their rocky intrenchments, the French were far from displaying their wonted spirit and vigour; and, what is very remarkable, the same troops who had ascended with so intrepid a step the crags of Soraoren, now abandoned with little resistance the loftier rocks of the Bayonette—a remarkable proof of the old observation, that the soldiers of that nation are much better adapted for offensive than defensive warfare, and an illustration of how much the courage of the bravest troops may be lowered by a long series of defeats. In this battle the Allies lost about sixteen hundred men, of whom one-half were Spaniards. The French were weakened by not more than fourteen hundred, their troops, during the greater part of the fighting, being protected by the intrenchments which they defended. But this was of little consequence. The enemy's intrenched position, upon which they had so long laboured, had been lost; the territory of the Great Nation was violated; and a vast hostile army, for the first time since the Revolution, was permanently encamped within the territory of France. And thus was England, which throughout the contest had been the most persevering and resolute of all the opponents of the Revolution, and whose government had never yet either yielded to the victories or acknowledged the chiefs which it had placed at the head of affairs, the first of all the powers of Europe which succeeded in planting its victorious standards on the soil of France.[1]

[1] Nap. vi. 268, 269. Wellington to Lord Bathurst, 9th Oct. 1813. Gurw. xi. 179.

24. Wellington's noble and humane conduct on entering France.

The first care of Wellington, after the army was established within the French territory, was to use the most vigorous measures to prevent plundering on the part of his troops, and to establish that admirable system of paying regularly for the supplies of the army, which, as much as the bravery of the British soldiers, had contributed to his previous successes. The better to effect

these objects, he issued a noble proclamation to his men, in which, after recounting the incalculable miseries which the exactions of the French soldiers had brought upon Spain and Portugal, he declared that it would be unworthy of a great nation to retaliate these miseries upon the innocent inhabitants of France, and therefore that plundering and every species of excess would be rigorously punished, and supplies of every kind paid for with the same regularity as they had been in the Peninsular kingdoms.* Neither the Spanish troops nor the French peasantry at first gave any credit to this proclamation, so utterly at variance was it with the system by which the former had been accustomed to suffer, and the latter to profit, during the Peninsular campaigns. But Wellington was at once serious in his intention, and resolute in his determination; and he soon gave convincing proof of both by instantly hanging several soldiers, both British and Spanish, who were detected in the act of pillaging. At the same time, the perfect regularity with which supplies of all kinds were paid for with ready money in the English camp, awakened the covetous feelings of the French mountaineers, who hastened to profit by the pro-

* "The officers and soldiers of the army must recollect that their nations are at war with France, solely because the ruler of the French nation will not allow them to be at peace, and is desirous of forcing them to submit to his yoke; and they must not forget that the worst of evils suffered by the enemy, in his profligate invasion of Spain and Portugal, have been occasioned by the irregularities of the soldiers, and their cruelties, authorised and encouraged by their chiefs, towards the unfortunate and peaceful inhabitants of the country.

"To revenge this conduct on the peaceful inhabitants of France would be unmanly, and unworthy of the nations to whom the commander of the forces now addresses himself; and, at all events, would be the occasion of similar and worse evils to the army at large, than those which the enemy's army have suffered in the Peninsula, and would eventually prove highly injurious to the public interests.

"The rules, therefore, which have been observed hitherto in requiring, and taking, and giving receipts for supplies from the country, are to be continued in the villages on the French frontier; and the commissioners attached to each of the armies of the several nations will receive the orders from the commander-in-chief of the army of their nations respecting the mode and period of paying for such supplies." — WELLINGTON'S *Proclamation, 8th October* 1813; GURWOOD, xi. p. 1.

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lific stream of war, which, fortunately for them, had entered their valleys. Simultaneously with this, fourteen French peasants, who had been taken near the pass of Echalar firing on the British troops, were conducted to Passages as prisoners of war, where they were embarked for the British islands. The effect of this stroke was incalculable; for the peasants could not deny its justice, or accuse the British general of harshness when treating them as prisoners of war; while at the same time the idea of being carried to England, appeared like an exile to the world's end to these simple mountaineers. Thus, impelled by terror on the one hand, and attracted by love of gain on the other, the peasantry generally laid aside all feelings of hostility, and the English dollars succeeded in revealing stores of subsistence in the mountains, which all the rigour of the French requisitions had been unable to discover.[1]*

[1] Pellot, 80. Tor. v. 366. Nap. vi. 268. Gurw. xi. 169.

25. Contrast presented by the French requisitions.

What rendered the impression of this conduct the greater upon the French peasantry, was the wide contrast which the measures of their enemies thus presented to the system which was at the same time pursued by their own defenders in the French army. The Revolutionary generals, now for the first time thrown back upon the territory of France, had no means, which the government of Paris would sanction, of providing for the subsistence, clothing, and often pay of the troops, but by forced requisitions on the countries in which they were cantoned. This system did admirably well, and was in the highest degree popular with the French, so long as

* "The system which the Allies adopted on entering France, was eminently calculated to render the inhabitants favourable to their operations; money, the sinews of war, was as abundant with them as it was wanting with us: they scattered it abroad with profusion, and took nothing without paying for it with hard cash on the spot. The English knew well that that affected generosity would do us more mischief than their arms; and, in point of fact, they thus obtained resources which we had been incapable of discovering. The peasants who could not reason were rapidly seduced by that politic conduct, and received as friends the army of the stranger whose footsteps sullied the soil of their country, and whose arms were stained with the blood of their brethren." —PELLOT, *Mémoires de la Guerre des Pyrénées*, p. 80.

the requisitions fell on foreign countries; but the case was very different now when they were driven back into their own territory, and these oppressive burdens had to be borne by themselves. Their eyes were then at once opened with appalling effect to the injustice which they so long practised upon others. When the whole arrondissements round Bayonne, accordingly, were laid under contribution for the support of Soult's army, and these demands were necessarily repeated as the wants of the troops called for fresh supplies, their indignation knew no bounds; and such was the general exasperation, that already they were contrasting these enormous revolutionary burdens with the comparatively light weight of the old *corvées*, which had been so much complained of before the Revolution. Soult, indeed, did his utmost to prevent plundering, and even executed an officer and some soldiers who had been detected pillaging a few houses in Sarre, immediately after the action. But this was not the grievance that was complained of: it was the forced requisitions; in other words, the organised rapine of government, that was the real evil which was so sorely felt. And thus, while the English army spread wealth and prosperity around its cantonments, the presence of the French was known only by the oppressive weight of the military exactions by which they were maintained. And such soon became the magnitude of these burdens, and the exasperation which they excited among the peasantry of the country, that Soult's principal commissary, Pellot, has not hesitated to ascribe chiefly to that cause the general indisposition manifested by the rural population of France, during the invasion of 1814, to support the cause of Napoleon.[1]*

[1] Pellot, 39, 42, 79.

* "The system of forced requisitions conceals, under the appearance of a just division of the burdens of war, an inexhaustible source of abuses. It weighs exclusively on the rural proprietors, while the capitalist, who has no productions, escapes it altogether. This system, born of the Revolution, applicable, perhaps, under a popular government, exasperates the mind under the rule of a single monarch. I do not hesitate to say that it is one of the

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26. Distress of Pampeluna.

When Wellington found himself once established in the territory of France, he immediately began strengthening his position with field-works, facing towards the north, in order to be the better able to resist any attempts Soult might make to expel him from the French soil. He waited only the surrender of Pampeluna to resume offensive operations; but such had been the activity which the governor had displayed in replenishing his magazines during the short interruption of the blockade by the battle of Soraoren, that it was not till two additional months had expired that his resources were exhausted. The garrison had confidently expected to be delivered on the 25th of July, and gazed with silent rapture on the mountains of Zubiri and Esteribar, which reflected at night the glow of the French bivouacs; but these hopes gradually died away as the fire receded on the day following, and their aching eyes beheld no friendly columns surmounting the nearest ridges of the Pyrenees. On the 30th the blockading forces resumed their old position, and the blockade became more strict than ever. Early in August, the Galicians, about nine thousand strong, replaced O'Donnell's Andalusians in the surrounding lines; while Mina, with ten thousand more, lay in the defiles of the Pyrenees to intercept the garrison, in case they should escape the vigilance of the troops around the town. With such strictness, however, was the blockade conducted, that, during the three months it lasted, the garrison never once received even a letter from their comrades.[1]

[1] Jones' Sieges, ii. 5, 9. Belm. iv. 776, 779. Nap. vi. 230.

27. Its capitulation. Oct. 31.

In the middle of October, the governor, who had conducted the defence with the most persevering constancy, put his troops on scanty rations of horse-flesh; and on the 26th, his resources being wholly exhausted, and the

causes which has chiefly contributed to render the departments subjected to requisitions so impatient of the government of Napoleon; the people were incessantly pronouncing with loud groans the words requisition and corvée."—PELLOT, *Commissaire-Général de la Guerre dans les Pyrénées en* 1813, p. 39.

garrison subsisting only on the most revolting vermin and unwholesome plants which grew on the ramparts,* negotiations were entered into for a surrender. Cassan, the governor, at first proposed to capitulate, on condition of being allowed to retire into France with six pieces of cannon; but this was positively refused, as Wellington's instructions were peremptory that the garrison must surrender at discretion. Upon this refusal hostilities were resumed, and the governor undermined some of the bastions, threatening to blow them up, and cut his way sword in hand to France, as Brennier had done at Almeida three years before. But three days more of hunger so tamed the spirit and reduced the strength of the garrison, that they were unequal to such an effort: Wellington's orders were positive, if such an attempt were made, to give no quarter to the governor or officers, and to decimate the garrison. Fortunately for the honour of England, and the fame of her chief, it was not necessary to have recourse to such extremities, which, in the case of the soldiers and inferior officers at least, would have been of very doubtful legality and unquestionable barbarity. On the 31st the garrison surrendered at discretion, to the number of three thousand, including eight hundred sick and wounded, and were made prisoners of war.[1]

[1] Belm. iv. 776, 779. Jones' Sieges, ii. 5, 11. Nap. vi. 290, 294. Wellington to Don Carlos de Espana, 20th Oct. 1813. Gur. xi. 210. Tor. v. 368, 369.

28. Soult's designs, at this period, of offensive operations.

Santona was now the only fortress which remained to the French in the north-west of Spain; and though Lord Aylmer, with his gallant brigade, was ordered to embark at Passages to aid in the reduction of that place, yet circumstances prevented the design being carried into effect, and it continued blockaded to the end of the war. Meanwhile Soult was at first anxious to abandon the lines in front of Bayonne, and proposed to debouch by Jaca with fifty thousand men into Aragon, unite with Suchet,

* Dogs and cats were esteemed a luxury; rats and mice had long been sought out with avidity; and several soldiers had died from eating the roots of hemlock which grew on the ramparts.—BELMAS, iv. 774.

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who, he thought, might join him with thirty thousand more, and a hundred pieces of cannon, and with their combined forces again invade Spain, maintaining the war on the resources of that country, instead of the now exhausted provinces of the south of France. But this project, which afforded by far the most feasible plan for averting from the imperial dominions the horrors of invasion, was rendered abortive by the obstinacy of Napoleon, in insisting upon the retention of so many fortresses in Catalonia by Suchet, which so reduced his effective force in the field, that, after providing a body of men to watch the Anglo-Sicilian army, he could not operate in Aragon with any respectable body. Suchet accordingly at once agreed to Soult's proposals, and declared his willingness to ascend the Ebro with thirty thousand men and a hundred guns, to co-operate with him in driving the Allies over that river; but only on condition that he got the artillerymen and draught horses of Soult's army sent to Catalonia, his own being absorbed in the fortresses. This was out of the question, as it would have entirely paralysed Soult himself; and, moreover, Suchet declared that he must, in conformity with the Emperor's instructions, return, as soon as the English were driven across the Ebro, to his principal duty, that of watching over the fortresses in Catalonia.[1]* Thus, the project of joint operations came to nothing; and meanwhile Wellington's

[1] See Belm. i. 267. Soult to Duc de Feltre, Oct. 1813. Ibid. i. 693. Suchet, ii. 348, and App. 454.

* "Informed as you are by the letters of the Duke of Dalmatia of the part assigned in his projects to the armies of Aragon and Catalonia, you will from this moment take measures to concur with all your disposable means in the general plan of joint operations; so as to be in a condition, the moment that I transmit to you his majesty the Emperor's sanction, to take the field: *taking care, however, to leave the fortresses of Catalonia and Aragon well garrisoned, and in the best possible state of defence.*" — DUC DE FELTRE, *Ministre de la Guerre, au* DUC D'ALBUFERA, 13*th Sept.* 1813; SUCHET, ii. 454, *Pièces Just.*

"In examining the dispositions which your excellency has directed to meet the case of the army being ordered to commence active operations, his majesty sees, as well as your excellency, grave objections to the plan as at present combined. It leaves the frontier altogether unguarded; and whatever movement you may execute with a corps in the field, *the first and indispensable condition to its commencement is, to leave a strong garrison in Barcelona, Figueras, and*

passage of the Bidassoa and invasion of France rendered all idea of offensive hostilities in the Peninsula out of the question, and fixed the theatre of war permanently in the south of France. A striking proof of the wisdom of the British government in urging, against Wellington's opinion, that bold undertaking.[1]

29. Description of Soult's position on the Nivelle.

Atlas, Plate 91.

Soult made good use of the month's respite afforded him by the prolonged resistance of the garrison of Pampeluna, to strengthen to a most extraordinary degree his position on the Nivelle. It consisted of three lines of defence, one behind another, which equalled those of Torres Vedras in strength and solidity. They ran along a line of hills forming the northern boundary, for the most part, of the valley of the Nivelle, and stretched from the sea and St Jean de Luz on the right, to Mount Daren on the left: from thence to St Jean Pied-de-Port, the line was protected by a ridge of rocks, so rugged that neither army could attempt to cross them. Numerous field-works, constructed on every eminence, especially on the right, where the great road to St Jean de Luz and Bayonne crossed the ridge, protected the line in every part where it appeared not to be adequately secured by the obstacles of nature. A second series of works in rear of the former ran from St Jean de Luz on the right to Cambo on the left, and embraced the camps of Espelette, Suraide, and Serres, the principal points

*Puycerda.*" — Duc de Feltre *au* Duc d'Albufera, 15*th Nov.* 1813; Suchet, ii. 457.

"On the 7th October Lord Wellington crossed the Bidassoa, and transported the war into the French territory. By that stroke everything was changed, and offensive operations became no longer possible to the French armies. Marshal Suchet, however, conceived he would still have time to succour the distant garrisons in the east of Spain: and he flattered himself he should be in a condition at their head to make an effort and march upon the Ebro. The minister at war entered into his views; and the Emperor himself, when he returned to Paris, breaking the silence which he had previously preserved on the projects submitted to him, seemed to approve of their execution. *Unhappily he directed that, when the army marched, a portion of it should be left in garrison at Barcelona, Figueras, and Puycerda.* The Duc d'Albufera besought in vain for the combinations promised in that event to enable him to march.

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where the French forces were assembled. A third line was established behind Santa Pé, on the road to Ustaritz; but the redoubts on it were only commenced. Those on the two former were completed, and armed with heavy guns drawn from the arsenal of Bayonne. Soult having been reinforced by sixteen thousand conscripts, had eighty thousand effective combatants under his orders, of whom seventy thousand were in the field, and could be relied on for active operations. The right, near St Jean de Luz, under Reille, consisted of three divisions of infantry: Clausel in the centre guarded the redoubts behind Sarre with three divisions; the left, under d'Erlon, of two divisions, was behind Ainhoué, on the right bank of the Nivelle. Foy, with his division, was on the extreme left, between St Jean Pied-de-Port and Bidarray, to threaten the Allied right, and act as circumstances might require.[1]

[1] Vict. et Conq. xxii. 286, 287. Pellot, 70, 71. Nap. vi. 332, 333. Tor. v. 370.

30. Wellington's plan of attack. Nov. 9.

The heavy rains usual in the end of autumn being over, and fine weather having returned, Wellington, on the 9th November, prepared for a general attack. After carefully surveying the enemy's position, he judged that it was weakest in the centre, in the opening between the Rhune mountains and the bridge of Amotz, over the Nivelle; and it was there accordingly that he resolved to make his principal effort. His plan of operations was thus arranged: Hill, with the right wing, consisting of the second and sixth divisions, under Stewart and Clinton,

He received proofs of confidence, but no increase of force. He grieved at seeing the precious time pass away, while nothing was done: he desired not less ardently than the government to deliver the garrisons, but he had not the means of realising his wishes."—SUCHET, *Mémoirs*, ii. 348, 349.

Colonel Napier (vi. 282, 284) represents the failure of this well-conceived project of joint operations on the part of Soult and Suchet, as the result of the latter throwing unnecessary and unfounded difficulties in the way of its execution. But it is plain, from the correspondence above quoted, that it in reality arose from the invincible repugnance which the Emperor felt to give up any of the great fortresses his arms had conquered, which necessarily deprived Suchet of the means of carrying it into execution, and was part of the same system which caused him to lose such noble armies in the garrisons on the Elbe, the Oder, and the Vistula.

Murillo's Spaniards, and two Portuguese brigades, was to assail the enemy's left, behind Ainhoué. The right centre, under Beresford, consisting of the third, fourth, and seventh divisions, under the command of Generals Colville, Cole, and Le Cor, were to direct their attack against the redoubts in front of Sarre and the heights behind it, supported on the left centre by Giron's Spaniards, who were to attack the slopes situated to the westward of Sarre. General Alten, with the light division and Longa's Spaniards, was in the first instance to attack the heights of La Petite Rhune, which the enemy still held as an advanced redoubt in front of the middle of his line, and, having carried them, to co-operate in the general attack on the centre; while Sir John Hope, who had succeeded Graham in the command of the left wing, consisting chiefly of Freyre's Spaniards, was to engage the enemy's attention by a feigned attack on their right, near the sea, on the hills in front of St Jean de Luz. Thus Hill and Beresford's corps, forming a mass of forty thousand admirable infantry, of whom above thirty thousand were British and Portuguese, were to be thrown on the weakest part of the enemy's line in the centre, near the bridge of Amotz, between Clausel's and d'Erlon's corps. It will be seen from these directions how many of England's best generals, Picton, Dalhousie, Leith, Oswald, and others, were absent from ill health, or other unavoidable causes; but, on the other hand, the posts assigned to the Spaniards in the fight, told how sensibly their discipline and efficacy had improved under Wellington's directions in the course of the campaign.[1]

[1] Murray's General Orders. Wyld, 142, 143. Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Nov. 13, 1813. Gurw. xi. 280, 281. Tor. vi. 371, 372.

31. Battle of the Nivelle, and storming of the Petite Rhune.

The action began at daylight by an assault on the enemy's fortified outworks on the Lesser Rhune, which was so far in advance of their main line that it required to be carried before the general attack could commence. This fort, perched on a craggy summit, surrounded on three sides by precipices two hundred feet high, was accessible only on the east by a long narrow ridge, which

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in that direction descended towards Sarre, in the valley of the Nivelle. The troops destined for this operation, consisting of the light division under Alten on the left, and Giron's Andalusians on the right, had been formed, concealed from the enemy, as near as possible to their respective points of attack on the evening of the 9th: and at the signal, on the following morning, of three guns from the lofty summit of Atchubia, they sprang up; the level rays of the sun glanced on ten thousand bayonets, and immediately the rugged sides of the Petite Rhune rang with the thunder of cannon, and were enveloped in smoke. The French fired fast from the summit of their inaccessible cliffs; but the 43d, which headed the attack of the light division, pressed boldly upward, and the first redoubt was soon carried. From thence to the second was an ascent almost precipitous, to be surmounted only by narrow paths, which, amidst the steep crags, wound up to the summit. There a desperate conflict, bayonet against bayonet, man against man, ensued; but the enthusiastic valour of the 43d overcame every opposition, and the fort was won. Upon this, the French retreated to their last stronghold, at the summit of the Petite Rhune, called the Donjon; and here the impetuous assault of the 43d was stayed by a natural ditch or cleft in the rocks, fifteen feet deep. Soon, however, the Portuguese Caçadores came to their aid; the 52d threatened them on the other side, and the outer works were abandoned. Upon this, the 43d with a loud shout leaped down into the cleft: in a minute the old walls were scaled, and the British colours planted on the highest summit of the castle. At the same time Kempt, though sorely wounded, kept the field, and expelled the enemy from the elevated plateau from which La Petite Rhune arose; and the French, driven out of all their advanced positions, fell back in great confusion to their main line of defence behind Ascain, leaving a battalion which was made prisoners at the summit of the mountain.[1]

[1] Nap. vi. 338, 341. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 288. Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Nov. 13, 1813. Gurw. xi. 281, 282.

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While the rocky summits of the Lesser Rhune were thus wrested from the enemy, the fourth and seventh divisions in the right centre, under Beresford, moved against the redoubts of St Barbara and Granada; and eighteen guns placed in battery against them soon sent such a stream of shot upward into the works, that the garrison, upon seeing the troops advancing with the scaling ladders, leaped down from their intrenchments and fled. Far on the right, Hill, after a long and difficult night-march, had got, a little before seven, to the front of the enemy's extreme left; and after driving them from the rugged positions immediately opposite, near Urdax, inclined upwards, and, with the aid of the sixth division, soon approached the broken ground where d'Erlon's redoubts were placed, near the bridge of Amotz. To the spectator on the Petite Rhune, which overlooked the whole of this complicated battle-field, it presented a scene of unequalled grandeur. Far to the left, Hope's Spaniards were coming into action, and a hundred guns below, answered by as many on the summits of the rocks, made a deafening roar in the lesser hills near the sea; while in the centre and right, fifty thousand men, rushing like an impetuous torrent down the slopes of the Atchubia mountain, with loud shouts chased the receding French divisions into the lower grounds near the Nivelle.[1]

32. Progress of the action on the right, and in the centre.

[1] Nap. vi. 342, 343. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 267, 268. Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Oct. 13, 1813. Gur. xi. 281, 282. Tor. v. 37, 373.

The enemy's troops, retreating at various points at the same time through broken ground, and having their line of defence pierced through in many places, were in no condition to resist this terrible onset, and gave way with an ease that proved that long-continued disaster had weakened their spirit. Clausel's divisions in the centre,*

33. Retreat of the French, and their rout on many points.

* "General Clausel was the first to declare with regret, that the divisions under his orders had not in all cases done their duty. If they had fought with the ardour which they had evinced in previous combats, and subsequently showed, the enemy, in spite of his superiority of number, would not have forced our lines without a loss of 15,000 or 20,000 men." — PELLOT, *Guerre des Pyrénées*, 73.

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in particular, yielded in a manner which called forth the severe animadversions of that general and Marshal Soult. Clinton, with the sixth division, broke through all the works guarded by d'Erlon's men, which covered the approaches to the bridge of Amotz, and then, wheeling to the right, attacked and carried in the most gallant style the enemy's redoubts behind Ainhoué, so as entirely to turn their defences in that quarter. The Portuguese division and Byng's brigade, with equal vigour, stormed the redoubts to which they were opposed in front of Ainhoué; and the French of d'Armagnac's division, finding that their line of defence was entirely broken through, set fire to their huts, and retreated behind Santa Pé, nearly two leagues to the rear. The rough nature of the ground caused the French left to fall into confusion while executing this retrograde movement; and Abbé's division, which stood next on the line, was entirely uncovered on its flank, and exposed to the most imminent danger. That brave general, however, stood firm, and for a short time arrested the flood of conquest; but d'Erlon, seeing his danger, at length ordered him to retreat. Conroux's division, which extended from Sarre to Amotz, was at the same time broken through at several points by the third, fourth, and seventh divisions, and its gallant commander mortally wounded. The third division, by carrying the bridge of Amotz, united its attack with that of the sixth division, and thus formed the apex of a wedge thrust in between the centre and left of the French army. Though occasionally arrested by the formidable redoubts which lay in their way, the flood of war did not the less roll impetuously on, until these isolated landmarks, cut off from each other, were overwhelmed,—as a stream tide, breaking on rock-bestrewn shores, rushes round the black masses which obstruct its rise, till, surrounded by the foaming surge, they are finally submerged.[1]

[1] Vict. et Conq. xxii. 288, 289. Nap. vi. 342, 345. Pellot, 72, 73. Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Nov. 13, 1813. Gurw. xi. 282, 283.

Clausel's right wing, however, forming the French right

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34. Rout of the French right centre, and completion of the victory.

centre, consisting of Taupin's division and a large body of conscripts, still stood firm; and the position which they occupied, resting on three large redoubts near Ascain, was such as to afford a fair prospect of rallying the fugitives, and still retrieving the day. But at this critical juncture the light division, which had won the Petite Rhune, pressing forward with unabated vigour, led by the gallant 52d, attacked Taupin's front; and Longa's skirmishers, having turned the same ridge and approached their flank, the French, seized with a sudden panic, broke and fled. Four regiments of the whole division alone remained unbroken, and the seventh and fourth British divisions quickly assailed them in front and flank, and they were put to the rout. The signal redoubt, the strongest in the whole French line, situated on a high hill in the centre, was now left to its fate, and Colborne, at the head of the 52d, advanced to storm it; but two attacks were repulsed with heavy loss, though on the third, the garrison, seeing themselves entirely cut off and surrounded, surrendered at discretion. During this rout of the right centre, Clausel's other divisions fled through the Nivelle in great disorder; and Soult, in extreme alarm, hurried from St Jean de Luz, with all his reserves, to endeavour to arrest the progress of defeat. Wellington, upon seeing the force which was thus ready to be thrown upon the flank of his victorious centre when hurrying on in the tumult of success, wisely halted the fourth and seventh divisions, and Giron's Spaniards, upon the northern slope of the heights they had won, looking down upon the enemy's camp at Serres. No sooner, however, had the sixth division, which was in reserve, come up, than the pursuit was renewed; the whole British centre crossed the Nivelle, drove the enemy from the heights beyond it, which formed his second line of defence, and established themselves on that advantageous ground, about two leagues in advance of the position occupied by them in the morning.[1] Upon this the

[1] Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Nov. 13, 1813. Gur. xi. 282, 283. Nap. vi. 349, 351. Tor. v. 372, 373. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 288, 289.

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enemy's right, under Reille, which had been engaged all day with Freyre's Spaniards, fell back also, and St Jean de Luz and Ascain were evacuated; and the whole line of the Nivelle, with its superb positions, and six miles of intrenchments, fell into the hands of the Allies.

35. The French retire to the intrenched camp in front of Bayonne. Nov. 11.

Next morning the victors advanced in order of battle at all points. Hope, with the left, forded the Nivelle above St Jean de Luz, and approached Bidart; Beresford, with the centre, moved direct upon Arbonne; and Hill, with the right, occupied Espelette and Suraide, and approached Cambo. During the battle on the preceding day, Foy, who with his division was in front of the Puerta de Maya, had gained some success against Mina and Murillo's Spaniards, to whom he was opposed, and captured a considerable part of their baggage. But the defeat of the main army obliged him also to fall back, and he effected his retreat, not without difficulty, by Cambo and Ustaritz, on the following day. Soult had now rallied his army in his third line of intrenchments, about eight miles in rear of the first; but the troops were too dispirited, and the works in too unfinished a state, to think of defending them; wherefore, abandoning that line also altogether, he retired into the intrenched camp he had constructed in front of Bayonne, leaving the whole intermediate country in the hands of the Allies. In this battle Wellington lost two thousand six hundred and ninety-four men; but the loss of the French was four thousand two hundred and sixty-five, including fourteen hundred prisoners. They abandoned fifty-one pieces of cannon, and all their field magazines; and, what was of more importance, the great mountain barrier, on which they had been labouring assiduously for three months, was broken through and captured; the Allies were firmly established a considerable way within the French territory, with the harbour of St Jean de Luz to bring supplies of all sorts into the heart of their cantonments;[1] and the flames of war had been seen lighted

[1] Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Nov. 13, 1813. Gur. xi. 284. Belm. i. 268. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 290, 291. Pellot, 73, 74. Nap. vi. 352, 353.

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upon the summit of their mountain screen, far and wide through the plains and valleys of France.

Though Wellington, however, had thus driven the French from their position, and gained very considerable extension for the cantonments of his troops, yet his own situation was far from being free from anxiety, and even peril. He was uneasy for his right flank so long as Soult held, which he still did, the *tête-de-pont* over the Nive; and, in consequence, Hill received orders to menace it on the 16th. This was accordingly done, and at his approach the French retired across the river and blew up the bridge, which effectually secured his right flank. But the disorders of the Spanish and Portuguese soldiers in the villages, as well as the pillaging of the British, was a more serious and durable subject of anxiety. With the latter, plunder was the result merely of the passing desire of gain and intoxication; but with the former it had a deeper origin, for it was founded on a profound thirst for vengeance, arising from the innumerable evils of a similar description which the French troops had inflicted upon every part of the Peninsula. There was hardly a soldier in the Spanish or Portuguese armies who could not tell the tale of a parent or brother murdered, a sister or daughter ravished, or a patrimony destroyed, from the violence of the French soldiers, or the more lasting scourge of their contributions. They not unnaturally imagined, that now that they had got into France, it was their turn to indulge in the same excesses, and satiate at once their thirst for vengeance and desire for plunder, on the blood and the property of the wretched inhabitants.* Rapine, accordingly, imme-

36. General disposition to pillage among Wellington's troops.

* "We ran up and found a poor old French peasant lying dead at the bottom of the garden. A bullet had passed through his head, and his thin gray hairs were dyed with his own blood. A Caçadore rushed out, and attempted to elude us. On entering, we saw an old woman, the wife of the peasant, lying dead in the kitchen. The desperate Portuguese did not attempt to deny having perpetrated these murders; he seemed, on the contrary, wound up to a pitch of frenzy,—'They murdered my father,' said he; 'they cut my

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diately commenced. On the very day of the battle, Freyre's and Longa's soldiers began pillaging Ascain the moment that they entered it, and murdered several of the inhabitants; Mina's battalions on the right, some of which had shaken off all authority, dispersed themselves, marauding through the mountains; the Portuguese and British soldiers of the left had begun the same disorders, and two persons had been killed in one small town.[1]

[1] Nap. vi. 366. Gur. xi. 325. Beauchamp, Guerre de 1814; ii. 31, 32.

37. His vigorous efforts to arrest it.

Natural as the feelings were which led to these excesses on the part of the Peninsular soldiers, they were utterly abhorrent to the disposition of Wellington; they were subversive of the principles on which he had throughout maintained the contest, and were only the more dangerous that they arose from such deeply moved passions of the human heart. Immediate and decisive, accordingly, were the measures which he adopted to remedy the evil. On the 12th, though in hourly expectation of a battle, he put to death all the Spanish marauders he could take in the act; and as the Peninsular generals were tardy or reluctant in carrying his orders into execution, and even remonstrated against them, he at once sent the whole Spaniards, except Murillo's division, which had conducted itself properly, out of France; obliging Freyre's Galicians to retire into Biscay, Giron's Andalusians into the valley of Bastan, and Longa's men over the Ebro; while Mina's mutinous battalions were disarmed and sent across the Pyrenees. By these vigorous measures, he deprived himself, at a period when he much required it, of the aid of twenty-five thousand now experienced troops.[2] But the effect was decisive:—it marked the lofty character of the man who would rather arrest success, even at its flood-tide,

[2] Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Nov. 27, 1813. Gur. xi. 325. Nap. vi. 366. Wellington to Freyre, Nov. 14, 1813. Gur. xi. 287, 288. Beauchamp, Guerre de 1814; ii. 31, 32.

mother's throat, and they ravished my sister before my eyes; and I vowed at the time I would put to death the first French family that fell into my hands; — you may hang me if you will, but I have kept my oath, and care not for dying.' He was hanged; indeed, no fewer than eighteen were suspended, on this and the following days, to the branches of trees. Such extreme measures were requisite to check the ardent thirst for vengeance in the Peninsular soldiers."—*Subaltern*, 146.

than purchase it by iniquity. It restored his authority in the army, and at once checked its excesses; and, by dissipating the fears of the French peasantry, brought them back to their homes, where, finding the strictest discipline established, and everything paid for in ready money, an amicable intercourse was immediately established between them and the invaders.

38. Violence of the democracy at Cadiz.

But although the disorders with which he was immediately surrounded were effectually checked by these energetic steps, it was not so easy a matter for the English general to make head against the dangers which were accumulating in his rear, and which threatened to snatch the fruits of victory from his grasp at the very time when they were within his reach. The democratic government at Cadiz, actuated by the furious passions and insatiable ambition which could not fail to be engendered by vesting the supreme power in an assembly elected by the universal suffrage of an old community, was indefatigable in its efforts to throw obstacles in his way, and excite the national passions against him.* A

* "It is quite clear to me, that if we do not beat down the democracy at Cadiz, the cause is lost; how that is to be done, God knows." — WELLINGTON *to* SIR H. WELLESLEY, 16*th October* 1813; GURWOOD, xi. 200.

"The persons who propagate the libels against the British army in Spain, are not the people of the country, but the officers of government, who would not dare to conduct themselves in this manner, if they did not know that their conduct would be agreeable to their employers. If this spirit is not checked, we must expect that the people at large will soon behave to us in the same manner; and we shall have no friend, or none who will avow himself as such, in Spain. A crisis is approaching in our connexion with Spain; and, if you do not bring the government and nation to their senses before they go too far, you will inevitably lose all the advantages which you might expect from the services you have rendered them. I recommend to you to complain seriously of the conduct of government and their servants: to remind them that Cadiz, Carthagena—and, I believe, Ceuta—were garrisoned with British troops at their own earnest request, and that, if they not been so garrisoned, they would long ere this have fallen into the hands of the enemy, and Ceuta of the Moors. I recommend to you to demand as a security for the safety of the King's troops, against the criminal disposition of the government and their servants, that a British garrison should be admitted to San Sebastian, with the intimation that, if this demand is not complied with, the troops should be withdrawn. And, if this is not conceded, I recommend you to withdraw the troops, be the consequences what they may, and to be prepared accordingly."—WELLINGTON *to* LORD BATHURST, 27*th November* 1813; GURWOOD, xi. 327.

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slight reverse would have blown the flame thus kindled into a conflagration; and it was only by the unbroken series of his successes that the Peninsular confederacy, at the moment when it had triumphed over all its external enemies, was prevented from falling the victim to unworthy jealousy and prejudiced ambition. To such a length did they carry their hostility, that though Wellington had nominally forty thousand Spaniards under his orders, he did not venture to advance them into France, because their total state of destitution rendered pillage almost unavoidable; and immediately after he had borne the British standards in triumph across the Pyrenees, he was so thwarted in all his designs by the democratic leaders at Cadiz, that he actually resigned the general command of their armies, and recommended to the British government entirely to withdraw their army from the Peninsula if their demands were not acceded to.[1]

[1] Gur. xi. 327. Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Nov. 27, 1813. Nap. vi. 424, 425.

39. And obstacles thrown in Wellington's way at Lisbon.

Nor were his difficulties less formidable at Lisbon, where the ample British subsidy was so dissipated by official corruption, that not one-half of it reached its proper destination. The muleteers of the army were two years, the soldiers nine months in arrear of their pay; the magazines were empty, the stores deficient; although the subsidy was fully adequate to have kept all these services abundantly supplied. Fortunately the Spanish authorities had still sufficient recollection of their defeats to appreciate the consequences of being left to their own resources. The resignation of Wellington was not accepted; the stern measure of sending back the marauders to Spain restored discipline to the Peninsular armies; and Wellington was again enabled, with undiminished forces, to renew the career of victory in the south of France.[2]

[2] Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Nov. 27, 1813. Gur. xi. 327. Nap. vi. 424, 434.

While Wellington was thus experiencing, in the rancour and jealousies which were accumulating in his rear in the Peninsula, which he had delivered, the baseness of factious opposition, and the usual ingratitude of men to

40. Wellington prepares to force the passage of the Nive.

those from whom they have received inestimable services, he was preparing to follow up his successes over Marshal Soult, and confound his democratic calumniators at Cadiz by fresh obligations. His vast army, eighty thousand strong even after the Spaniards were withdrawn, and powerful in artillery and cavalry—the former numbering a hundred pieces, and the latter eight thousand six hundred sabres—was restrained in the contracted space which it occupied; and he was anxious to extend his cantonments, and gain possession of more fertile districts, by forcing the passage of the Nive, and throwing the enemy entirely back under the cannon of Bayonne. But the heavy and long-continued winter rains, which in the deep clay of Béarn rendered the roads knee-deep of mud, and wholly impassable for artillery or chariots, prevented him from undertaking any offensive operations till the end of the first week in December. At that period, however, the weather cleared up, and the Nive having become fordable, he brought up fifty pieces of cannon, and the passage of the river was attempted; an effort which led to one of the most desperate and sanguinary actions of the war.[1]

[1] Vict. et Conq. xxii. 291. Nap. vi. 368, 369. Pellot, 79, 80.

41. Soult's position in front of Bayonne.

Atlas, Plate 92.

Soult's situation on the Nive, though strong, was full of difficulties. Bayonne, situated at the confluence of that river and the Adour, commanded the passage of both; and though a weak fortress of the third order, it had now, from its situation, and the intrenched camp of which it formed a part, become a point of first-rate importance. The camp, being commanded by the guns of the fortress immediately in its rear, could not be attacked in front, on which account the French general stationed only his centre there, composed of six divisions under D'Erlon. The right wing, consisting of Reille's two divisions and Villatte's reserve, was placed to the westward of the fortress on the lower Adour, where there was a flotilla of gunboats; and the approach to it was covered by a swamp and artificial inundation. The left under

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Clausel, consisting of three divisions, posted to the eastward of Bayonne, stretched from its right to the Nive, and was protected partly by the flooded grounds, and partly by a large fortified house which had been converted into an advanced work. The country in front consisted of deep clay soil, and was much inclosed and intersected by woods and hedge-rows. Four divisions of d'Erlon's men occupied it beyond the Nive, in front of Ustaritz, and as far as Cambo ; the remainder being in reserve, stationed on a strong range of heights, in front of Mousserolles, stretching from Villefranque on the Nive, almost to Vieux Mouguerre on the Adour. The great advantage of this position was, that the troops, in case of disaster, might securely find refuge under the cannon of Bayonne ; while the general-in-chief, having an interior and protected line of communication through that fortress, could at pleasure, like Napoleon at Dresden, throw the weight of his forces from one flank to another, when unforeseen and unguarded against, upon the enemy.[1]

[1] Vict. et Conq. xxii. 290, 291. Nap. vi. 369, 370. Belm. i. 269.

42. His political difficulties.

But although, in a military point of view, the position of Soult was thus favourable, his political situation was very different ; and it required all his perseverance, and vigour of administrative powers, to make head against the difficulties which were hourly accumulating round the sinking empire. His soldiers, though depressed by defeat, were still brave and docile. It was the difficulty of procuring supplies which was the real evil ; it was the system of making war maintain war, which now pressed with terrible but just severity on the falling state. Money there was none to be got from headquarters in Paris ; and the usual resource of the imperial government on such emergencies, that of levying contributions, however warmly and unanimously approved of so long as these were laid on other countries, was now complained of as the most intolerable of all grievances when they fell upon its own. Nor is it surprising that this universal indignation burst forth when the imperial system of govern-

ment came to be really felt in France itself; for we have the authority of official documents for the assertion, that in Navarre, for some years before the French were driven out of the country, the requisitions had often amounted to two hundred per cent of the whole income of the landowners and farmers. So oppressive were the exactions of the French authorities felt to be, that numbers migrated into the British lines, where they not only were subjected to no such burdens, but found a ready and well-paid market for all their commodities. An official letter written from Bayonne at this period said, "The English general's policy, and the good discipline he maintains, do us more harm than ten battles—every peasant wishes to be under his protection." The conscripts raised in all the southern provinces were indeed marched in great numbers into Bayonne; but the ancient spirit of the imperial armies was gone; they deserted by hundreds at a time, although every possible care was taken to treat them with gentleness, to spare their inexperienced frames, and to set them only on duty in the interior of the fortress.[1]

[1] Soult's corresp. MS. in Nap. vi. 506, 507. Pellot, 79, 80. Toreno, v. 369.

43. Wellington's dispositions for the attack.

Having taken his resolution to force his adversary's position in front of Bayonne, Wellington made the following dispositions for the attack:—Sir John Hope and General Charles Alten, with the first, fifth, and light divisions, Vandeleur's cavalry, and twelve guns, in all twenty-four thousand combatants, were to drive back the French advanced posts along the whole front of the intrenched camp from the Nive to the sea. On the right, Sir Rowland Hill with the second and Portuguese divisions, Vivian's and Victor Alten's cavalry, and Ross's horse artillery, was to put himself in motion in the night between the 8th and 9th, so as to pass the Nive by the fords of Cambo at daybreak on the latter day, and advance by the great road from St Jean Pied-de-Port towards Bayonne. At the same time Beresford, in the centre, with the third and sixth divisions, was to cross

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the Nive by bridges to be thrown over it during the night; while the fourth and seventh divisions were to be in reserve a little in the rear, concealed from the enemy, but ready to support any part of the line which might require it. The main attack was to be made by the centre and right: the principal object of the advance by Hope, on the left, was to acquire an accurate view of the nature of the enemy's works between Bayonne and the sea, on the Lower Adour. Wellington's object in these movements was not to force the intrenched camp before Bayonne, which, from its being under the guns of that fortress, could not be effected without very heavy loss; but to place his right upon the Adour, after crossing the Nive, whereby the enemy, already distressed for provisions, would lose the means of communication with the interior by the aid of that river, and would be compelled to fall back to other and more distant quarters, from which to draw his resources.[1]

[1] Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Dec. 14, 1813. Gur. xi. 365. Murray's Gen. Orders in Wyld, 147. Wellington to Sir J. Hope, Dec. 9, 1813. Wyld, 150.

44. Forcing of the passage of the Nive on the French centre and left. Dec. 9.

The requisite preparatory movements having been made with perfect accuracy on the night of the 8th, a huge fire, lighted on a height behind Cambo at daybreak on the 9th, gave the signal of attack. The French had broken down the bridges at Ustaritz in the centre; but the island which connected them was in the possession of the British, and the passage was immediately forced under cover of a heavy fire of artillery. D'Armagnac's brigade, which lay opposite, was driven back by the sixth division. At the same time, Hill's troops, under the cover of artillery, crossed over on the right above and below Cambo, and drove the French left wing back on the great road from St Jean Pied-de-Port to Bayonne. With such vigour was this onset made, that Foy, who commanded in that quarter, was separated from his men, and driven across the fields, with a few followers, towards Hasparren. No sooner, however, did the French troops behold the bale-fire lighted behind Cambo, than they all flew to arms. Abbé's division, which was nearest, soon

joined Foy's men, and their united forces took a position on a range of heights running parallel to the Adour, with Villefranque on their right. At the same time Hope, with the left wing, moved forward by the great road from St Jean de Luz towards Bayonne; drove in all the enemy's advanced posts after a vigorous resistance, and approached so near to his intrenchments under that fortress, as completely to achieve the object intrusted to him in the general plan of operations. Shortly after noon, the Portuguese of the sixth division having come up, Hill attacked d'Armagnac's troops at Villefranque and the heights adjoining, and, after some sharp fighting and one repulse, drove them out of the former, and established himself in strength on the latter, the French retiring, amidst a heavy rain, by deep and almost impassable roads, towards Bayonne.[1]

[1] Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Dec. 14, 1813. Gur. xi. 365, 366. Nap. vi. 373, 374. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 291, 292.

45. Soult's able plan for retrieving his affairs.

The passage of the Nive was now forced, the French left driven under the cannon of Bayonne, and the English general established in a position from whence he could at pleasure, by a slight extension of his right, intercept the navigation of the Upper Adour, the great artery by which the French army was supplied, and which it was the chief object of the attack to cut off. But though this passage had thus been surprised, and the operations successful, his situation had become one of no inconsiderable peril. The Nive, flowing in an oblique direction from south-east to north-west, cut his army in two; while Soult with his troops, concentrated in the intrenched camp, and enjoying ample means of communicating at pleasure, by the bridges of Bayonne, from the one bank to the other, might, unknown to the Allies, throw the weight of his forces on either half of their army, when deprived of the means of co-operation with the other. He immediately resolved to take advantage of this singular good fortune, and did so with an ability and decision which would have done honour to Napoleon himself. During the night he drew back the whole of his troops

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into the intrenched camp, yielding thus to the Allies the ground they had won on his left, and permitting them to extend themselves to the Adour, and intercept his principal communications by that river. But while thus abandoning in appearance the whole objects of the contest, he was preparing a blow which was calculated to effect, and had wellnigh produced, a total change in the fortunes of the campaign. He gave orders in the night for the whole troops to hold themselves in readiness to start at daylight; and, after providing for the defence of the intrenched camp and the fortress, early on the morning of the 10th he issued forth on the left of the Nive, with nearly his whole disposable forces, about sixty thousand strong, to assail one-half of the Allies stationed in that quarter, not mustering more than thirty thousand combatants.[1]

1 Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Dec. 14, 1813. Gur. xi. 367, 368. Nap. vi. 375, 376. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 293. Belm. i. 269.

46. Situation of the British left and centre at this period. Dec. 10.

At daylight this formidable apparition burst upon the British left, by which such an onset, after the success of the preceding day, was wholly unexpected. Hope's troops, with the exception of Wilson's Portuguese, deeming the contest over, had retired to their cantonments; the first division was at St Jean de Luz, six miles from the outposts; the light division had orders to retire from Bassussary to Arbonne, nearly four miles in the rear, but had fortunately not begun to move; and the fifth division was near Bidart: so that the troops were scattered in a way of all others the most favourable for being cut up in detail. The British brigades which were left in front occupied indeed a strong position, stretching along the ridge of Barrouilhet, across the great road to the Bidassoa, and along the ridge of Arcangues on its right; and the country in that direction, much intersected by woods and hedgerows, and capable of being traversed, like la Vendée, only by narrow and deep roads, was very susceptible of defence. But the risk was extreme that the light division, not more than six thousand in number, would be crushed before any succour could arrive

for its support. The chateau and church of Arcangues, and the village of the same name, constituted strong points of defence; and three tongues of land extended from its front to the northward by which the enemy must approach; they were held by the 52d, the pickets of the 43d, and the Rifles, while the valleys between them were clothed with copsewoods, which were almost impenetrable. Intrenchments had been ordered to be constructed on a great scale, to strengthen this part of the position; but they were only traced out, and the fourth division, the nearest support, was several miles in rear of the light.[1]

[1] Nap. vi. 377, 379. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 393. Pellot, 82, 83.

47. Desperate combat at Arcangues and Bidart.

In these circumstances, if Soult had adhered to his original design of massing his whole army together on the plateau of Bassussary, and falling at once on the light division at Arcangues, it must inevitably have been destroyed. But late in the evening he changed his plan, and, instead of concentrating his force on one point, divided it into two corps—the one of which, under Clausel, advanced against Arcangues, while the other, led by Reille, moved against Hope by the great road to the Bidassoa. A heavy rain fell in the night; and it was some time after daybreak ere the enemy, whose vast accumulation in front of Arcangues was wholly unsuspected, were observed to be lining the hedgerows, and silently stealing up the wooded hollows in front of that village. Kempt, who was with the pickets, no sooner observed these ominous symptoms, than he gave orders to occupy the church and village with his reserves, and there was barely time to complete these preparations when the enemy were upon them. Issuing from the woods and the hollows with loud cries, and all the restored confidence of victory, the French fell upon the pickets on all the tongues of land in front of Arcangues in overwhelming numbers, and with assured anticipation of success. To maintain their ground against such vast odds would have exposed themselves to certain destruction; and the 43d, 52d, and

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Rifles, with a Portuguese regiment, fell swiftly back along the narrow necks of land for above a mile, firing all the way; but no sooner had they reached the open ground at their extremity in front of Arcangues, than these incomparable troops suddenly united their seemingly routed bodies, faced about, and presented an impenetrable front to their pursuers. The French, with loud cries, and extraordinary enthusiasm at their now unwonted success, advanced to the attack, and Soult brought up a battery of twelve guns directly in front of Arcangues, which opened a heavy cannonade on the church and village; but the 43d, Rifles, and Portuguese, by an incessant and well-directed fire of small-arms, made good their post, while the 52d held the open ground on the left, towards the great road, with invincible courage.[1]

[1] Wellington to Lord Bathurst, 14th Dec. 1813. Gur. xi. 367. Subaltern, 183, 185. Nap. vi. 381, 383. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 294.

48. Bloody conflict on the left at Barrouilhet.

While this desperate conflict was going on in the centre, in front of Arcangues, a still more sanguinary and doubtful fight had commenced on the left, at Barrouilhet. There the attack was so wholly unexpected, that the first division and Lord Aylmer's brigade were at St Jean de Luz and Bidart, six miles in the rear, when the action commenced about nine o'clock. At that hour, Reille with two divisions attacked a Portuguese brigade in Anglet, the advanced post of the left, and soon drove them out of that village, and pursued them with heavy loss to the ridge of Barrouilhet, where they rallied on Robinson's brigade of the fifth division, and stood firm. A confused but desperate and bloody conflict immediately ensued along the whole line in that quarter, as the assailants, heated and animated by their success, pushed through the openings in the hedges, at some places penetrating these, in others vigorously repulsed. But by degrees the troops from the rear came up. Lord Aylmer's brigade of the Guards and Bradford's Portuguese arrived in breathless haste, and relieved Robinson's men, who by this time had suffered severely; and Sir John Hope, who received a severe contusion, and his whole staff, set

a noble example of ability, coolness, and devoted valour. Thus time was gained; and meanwhile Wellington, who, during the night of the 9th, had been on the right bank of the Nive, alarmed by the heavy fire on his left, repaired in person at daybreak to the threatened side of the river, and made the third and sixth divisions cross, while Beresford threw over another bridge to facilitate the passage. As soon as he arrived near Arcangues, and saw how matters stood, he ordered up in addition the fourth and seventh divisions; and the sight of these imposing masses, which now appeared on the field, so disconcerted Soult, that he suspended all further attacks, and both parties rested on their arms on the field of battle.[1]

[1] Gurw. xi. 367, 368. Gleig's Subaltern, 188, 189. Pellot, 83. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 294, 295.

Soult's blow, ably conceived and bravely executed, had now been delivered, and failed; the attack of his concentrated masses on the Allied left had been met and driven back by a small part only of the British force. Still that indefatigable officer did not yet hold himself beat; instead of being disconcerted by his repulse, he immediately set about fresh combinations to recall victory to his standards. But in the night a disheartening reverse occurred, strikingly manifesting that the fortunes of Napoleon were sinking. Two German regiments, one of Nassau and one of Frankfort, came over to the Allies, and were received with unbounded joy, drums beating and arms presented by the British battalions, who were drawn up to receive them. They were not deserters, but acted in obedience to the command of their prince, who, having joined the ranks of Germany's deliverers on the Rhine, now sent secret instructions to his troops in Soult's army to do the same. Several other German regiments were in Catalonia, and both generals immediately sent advices of what had occurred to the rival chiefs in that province—the one hoping to profit, the other to take warning, from the occurrence.[2] Before the intelligence arrived, however, Suchet had already, by the Emperor's orders, disarmed the troops of that race,

49. Two German regiments pass over to the Allies in the night.

[2] Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Dec. 14, 1813. Gur. xi. 368. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 296. Nap. vi. 387. Suchet, ii. 357. Subaltern, 193.

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two thousand four hundred strong, in his army—with a heavy heart, for they were among the best soldiers he had: so that they were merely lost to the French, but not gained to the Allies. Those which came over to Wellington were immediately embarked at St Jean de Luz, and soon after joined the ranks of their countrymen on the banks of the Rhine.

50. An attack on the left is repulsed by Hope and Wellington in person.

The forenoon of the day following, the 11th, passed without any considerable action; but about two o'clock Wellington ordered the 9th regiment to make a reconnoissance on the left towards Pucho, which led to a sharp skirmish at that point, in which the 9th, being at first unsupported, was worsted, but was at length, with difficulty, brought off by the aid of some Portuguese which Hope advanced. Soult, upon this, seeing the British unprepared, ordered a general attack on the ridge of Barrouilhet; and it was executed with such vigour and celerity, that the French got into the midst of the British position before they were ready to receive them; and a confused action began with great animosity in the village of Barrouilhet and the adjoining wood. The Allies were so worn out and reduced in number by incessant fighting all that and the preceding day, that the village and mayor's chateau were both carried; the Portuguese broke and fled, and some of the British regiments began to waver. At that moment Wellington himself rode up to the troops in front of the church—"You must keep your ground, my lads," cried he; "there is nothing behind you—charge!" Instantly a loud hurrah was raised; the fugitives on the flank rallied and re-formed line; a volley was poured in, the bayonets levelled, and the enemy were driven, still obstinately fighting, out of the village and chateau, which remained in the possession of the British; as one bull, his horns close locked in his adversary's, is fairly mastered and pushed back by the superior strength of his antagonist.[1] General Hope soon after came up with the 85th regiment; and that noble officer,

[1] Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Dec. 14, 1813. Gur. xi. 367, 369. Nap. vi. 385, 389. Gleig's Subaltern, 188, 189. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 294, 295. Pellot, 83, 84.

whose overflowing courage ever led him to the front, where the fire was hottest and the danger greatest, was to be seen among the troops, his lofty figure overtopping all the motley throng with which he was surrounded, animating his men by his voice and example.* By great exertions he at length restored order, and the enemy were repulsed, with a loss of about six hundred on each side; but the fifth division, being now exhausted with fatigue, and much reduced in numbers, was relieved by the first in the front of the position.

51. Soult passes over again to attack Hill on the right of the Nive.

Nothing but a severe cannonade, which consumed fruitlessly four hundred men on each side, took place on the 12th; and Soult, seeing that the mass of the enemy's forces was now concentrated on the left of the Adour, resolved to renew his attack on the British right, under Hill, on the right bank of that river. With this view, in the night of the 12th, he again drew the bulk of his forces through Bayonne; and leaving only two divisions and Villatte's reserve in the intrenched camp on the left bank of the Nive, crossed over with seven divisions to the right bank, in order to crush Hill, who had now two divisions only and some brigades—in all fourteen thousand combatants, with fourteen guns, in that quarter. The advantages of the French marshal's position singularly favoured this operation; for his internal line of communication, from the one bank to the other, by the bridge of boats above Bayonne, was three quarters of a league only

* "I have long entertained the highest opinion of Sir John Hope, in common, I believe, with the whole world; and every day's experience convinces me of his worth. We shall lose him, however, if he continues to expose himself to fire as he has done in the last three days; indeed his escape was then wonderful. His hat and coat were shot through in many places, besides the wound in his leg. He places himself among the sharpshooters, without, as they do, sheltering himself from the enemy's fire."—WELLINGTON *to* COL. TORRENS, 15*th Dec.* 1813. GURW. xi. 371. The author has a melancholy pleasure in recording these lines to the memory of a noble relative, now no more; whose private worth and patriotic spirit, in the management of his great estates, as Earl of Hopetoun, have enshrined his memory as imperishably in the hearts of his friends and tenantry, as his public services have in the annals of his country.

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in length, while Wellington's on the outer circle was no less than three leagues. In this way he succeeded, before daylight on the 13th, in placing thirty-five thousand combatants in Hill's front on the right of the Nive at St Pierre, while seven thousand more menaced his rear. In expectation of this attack, Wellington ordered the sixth division to cross at daylight again to the right of the Nive; and the fourth division, and a part of the third, were soon after moved in the same direction, by the bridge which Beresford had thrown across two days before; while a division of Galicians was brought forward to St Jean de Luz, and one of Andalusians from the Bastan to the rear of the British army at Itsatsou, and fed from the British magazines. But before any of these succours approached, Hill had, by the native valour of his men, defeated the whole efforts of his antagonists, three times more numerous than themselves.[1]*

[1] Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Dec. 14, 1813. Gur. xi. 369. Nap. vi. 389, 392. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 296. Pellot, 84, 85.

52. Position of Hill's corps.

His force was stationed on both sides of the high road from Bayonne to St Jean Pied-de-Port, and occupied a line about two miles in length. The centre, consisting of Ashworth's Portuguese and Barnes's British brigade, was strongly posted on a rugged conical height, one side of which was broken with rocks and brushwood, while the other was closed in by high and thick hedges, with twelve guns pointing directly down the great road by which the enemy were to advance. The left, under Pringle, occupied a wooded and broken ridge, in the middle of which was the old chateau of Villefranque; the right, under Byng, was posted on the ridge of Vieux Mouguerre, nearly parallel to the Adour. The French occupied with their pickets a range of counter-heights, nearly parallel, at the distance of about a mile. Between the two armies was a wide valley or basin, open, and commanded in every part by the Allied guns; while the roads were too deep, and the soil too wet for the action of cavalry. The posi-

* See Appendix, C, Chap. LXXXIII.

tion was intersected in its centre by the great road to St Jean Pied-de-Port, as that at Waterloo was by the chaussée leading through La Belle Alliance to Charleroi. The heavy rains during the night so swelled the Nive, that Beresford's bridge of boats was swept away; and though it was soon restored next morning, yet during the early and most critical period of the action, Hill's corps was entirely separated from the remainder of the army.[1]

[1] Nap. vi. 392, 393. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 297. Pellot, 85.

53. French order of attack.

A thick mist, on the morning of the 13th, enabled Soult to form his columns of attack unperceived by his adversary, and they were extremely formidable. In front, on the great road, came d'Erlon, leading on d'Armagnac's, Abbé's, and Daricau's infantry, with a large body of cavalry, and twenty-two guns; next came Foy's and Maransin's men, and, behind, the other two divisions in reserve. These huge and dark masses, closely grouped together on the high road and fields immediately adjoining, at one time entirely shrouded in mist, at another dimly descried through openings of the vapour, seemed of portentous magnitude. With dauntless hearts, however, the little army of the British beheld the imposing array, albeit well aware that the bridge of the Nive had been swept away, and that no succour would be obtained till the day was far spent. At half-past eight the sun broke forth. Soult immediately pushed forward his light troops, and drove in the Allied pickets in the centre, which fell back towards St Pierre. Abbé attacked them with great vigour; d'Armagnac, standing off to the left, directed his troops against Vieux Mouguerre and Byng's men; Daricau, marching by his right, moved against Pringle. The sparkling line of fire soon crept up the slopes on either side of the basin, and the more distant hills re-echoed with the roar of forty guns, which were worked with extraordinary vigour.[2]

[2] Nap. vi. 395. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 297. Pellot, 85.

Abbé's onset in the centre was pushed with such energy, that Ashworth's Portuguese were soon driven in; and

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54. Battle of St Pierre, and imminent danger of the British.

the 71st, which was sent with two guns to their aid, was likewise forced to give ground; but the 50th having advanced to its support, the French in their turn were repulsed. The enemy upon this brought up a strong battery of cannon, which played on the British centre with such effect that it was seriously weakened; and Abbé, seeing the impression, pushed forward a deep and massy column, which advanced with great vigour, in spite of a crashing cannonade that tore its front and flanks, drove back the Portuguese and 50th, and won the crest of the hill in the centre. Barnes upon this brought up the 92d Highlanders, who were in reserve behind St Pierre; and that noble corps charged down the highway, clearing away the skirmishers on either side. The main body, driving home, met the shock of two French regiments which were advancing up the causeway, but which soon wavered, broke, and fled, closely followed by the mountain plumes. Soult immediately advanced his guns on either side, the shot from which plunged through the flanks of the pursuing mass, while fresh regiments were brought up to arrest its advance. Despite all their valour, the Highlanders were unable to resist this accumulation of enemies. The French corps in front advanced steadily forward with admirable resolution, and the 92d were borne back, fighting desperately, but in disorder, to their old ground behind St Pierre. The Portuguese guns upon this drew back to avoid being taken; the French skirmishers everywhere crowded forward to the front. Barnes fell, badly wounded; the Portuguese gunners, who had resumed their post in the rear, dropped so fast beside their pieces that their fire almost ceased. The 71st were withdrawn from the field, by orders from their colonel, gnashing their teeth with indignation at being taken out of the battle; the 3d, on the right, had yielded to the impetuous attack of d'Armagnac; nothing but the thick hedge in their front prevented Ashworth's Portuguese from being driven from their ground;[1] and

[1] Pringle's Memoir, 37, 39. Nap. vi. 395, 397. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 297, 298. Belm. i. 270.

55. Hill restores the action by supporting the centre.

already the once dreaded, but long unheard, cries of victory resounded through the French lines.

Then was seen in its highest lustre what can be effected in war by individual firmness and resolution, and how vital are the duties which, at the decisive moment, devolve on the general-in-chief. No sooner did Hill, who had stationed himself on a mount in the rear, from whence he could survey the whole field of battle, behold the critical position of the centre and right, and especially the retreat of the 71st and 3d regiments, than he descended from his eminence, and in person led on one brigade of Le Cor's Portuguese infantry to support Barnes's men in the centre, while the other was despatched to aid the right at Vieux Mouguerre against d'Armagnac. Meanwhile the right wing of the 50th, and Ashworth's Caçadores, spread themselves as skirmishers behind the impenetrable hedge, and still with the most heroic courage made good their post. The 92d in consequence had time to re-form behind St Pierre; and their gallant colonel, Cameron, led them again down the road with colours flying and music playing. At this sight the skirmishers on the flanks again rushed forward; the French tirailleurs were in their turn driven back, and the 92d charged at a rapid pace down the highway, until they met the solid column of French infantry, in all the pride of victory, marching up. For a moment the dense mass stood firm; a shock with crossed bayonets seemed inevitable, when suddenly the enemy wheeled about and retired across the valley to their original position, scarcely pursued by the victors, who were so thoroughly exhausted with their desperate encounter as to be ready to drop down with fatigue. At the same time, the brave 71st, indignant at being withdrawn from the fight, returned to aid the tartan uniforms with such alacrity, and were so gallantly supported by Le Cor's Portuguese, headed by Hill and Stewart, that the enemy on the right centre also were overthrown, though not without heavy loss,[1]

[1] Pringle's Memoir, 39, 43. Nap. vi. 397, 398. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 297, 298.

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including that of Le Cor himself, who fell severely wounded.

56. Progress of the battle on the two wings, where the British are at length victorious.

While this terrible conflict was going forward in the centre, d'Armagnac, on the British right, with the aid of six pieces of horse-artillery, had all but carried the ridge of Vieux Mouguerre, where Byng bravely struggled against vastly superior forces. But just as that division had established itself on the summit, and appeared in threatening masses on the right of the British centre, the brigade of Portuguese, so opportunely detached by Hill, arrived in double-quick time to their support. These admirable troops, ascending the reverse slope of the ridge under a raking fire from the French guns, now established on the summit, succeeded in rallying the 3d regiment; and the two united charged again up the hill with the utmost gallantry, and with loud shouts won the top. At the same time, Soult was obliged to withdraw d'Armagnac's reserve to support Abbé in the centre; and Byng, now more feebly opposed, succeeded in re-establishing himself in a solid manner on the Partouhiria range. Meanwhile Daricau, on the British left, maintained a brave and balanced contest on the hills of Villefranque with Pringle's brigade, who stoutly stood their ground; but the repulse of Abbé, in the centre, rendered it impossible for the gallant Frenchman to maintain the advanced position he had attained, and his own losses having been very severe, he was soon after obliged to fall back to his original position on the other side of the basin.[1]

[1] Pringle's Memoir, 47, 52. Nap. vi. 398, 400. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 298, 299.

57. The arrival of Wellington with the other divisions completes the victory.

Thus the repulse of the enemy was complete at all points before the other divisions came up from the left bank of the Nive. But at half-past twelve, the sixth division, which had marched without intermission since daylight, and crossed by the re-established bridge of boats behind Villefranque, appeared, led on by Wellington in person, in imposing strength, on the mount in the rear from which Hill had descended; and it was soon followed by the third and fourth divisions, and some brigades

of the seventh, who were seen hurrying forward in great haste from the bridge. At this joyful sight, the wearied British, forgetting their fatigues, resumed the offensive at all points. Buchan's and Byng's brigades, with loud cheers, hurled d'Armagnac's division down the Partouhiria slope ; and the centre, rushing impetuously forward, enveloped and carried all the advanced positions still held by the enemy in front of St Pierre, taking two guns, which had galled them excessively from the beginning of the fight. In vain Soult hurried to the front, and, exposing his life like the meanest of his followers, besought his men by the remembrance of their past glories, and the sight of the present dangers of their country, to return to the charge. Nothing could withstand the onward movement of the British ; and the French, baffled at all points, recoiled to the ground they had held before the action commenced. The battle now died away, first to a declining interchange of musketry, and then to a distant cannonade ; and before night, Soult, despairing of success in any further attacks, withdrew his troops into the intrenched camp, and himself crossed with Foy's division to the right bank of the Adour, to guard against any attempts on the part of the enemy to cross that important river.[1]

[1] Wellington to Lord Bathurst, 14th Dec. 1813. Gur. xi. 369. Nap. vi. 399, 400. Vict. et Conq. xxii. 299, 300. Pellot, 85, 87.

58. Results of the battle.

This desperate battle, one of the most bloody and hard-fought which had occurred in the whole course of the Peninsular war, cost the British two thousand five hundred, and the French three thousand men. The total loss of the Allies, from the time when the passage of the Nive commenced, was six hundred and fifty killed, three thousand nine hundred and seven wounded, and five hundred and four prisoners—in all, five thousand and nineteen ; and this included five generals, Hope, Robinson, Barnes, Le Cor, and Ashworth, wounded : a clear proof of the obstinate nature of the conflict, and of the stern necessity which had compelled the chiefs to expose themselves as much as the humblest soldiers. The

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French lost six thousand men, killed or wounded, on the field, besides two guns, the hard-earned trophies of the fight at St Pierre: including the German troops who came over on the night of the 10th, they were weakened by eight thousand five hundred men. But, what was of still more importance, they had lost the object for which they fought. The Allies had crossed the Nive, and were established in strength on the left bank of the upper Adour; the navigation of that river was intercepted; and Soult, with all the advantage of an intrenched camp and fortress in his rear, with an interior and central line of communication for his troops, had not only been unable to obtain any durable advantage over the portions of the Allied army which he had successively assailed with his whole force, but he had been deprived of his principal line of communication, and disabled, as the event soon proved, from continuing in his defensive position under the cannon of Bayonne.[1]

[1] Wellington to Lord Bathurst, 14th Dec. 1813. Gur. xi. 371. Belm. i. 270. Pellot, 89. La Pena, 72.

59. Great advantages of Wellington's winter quarters.

The good effects of the ground which Wellington had won with so much toil and bloodshed, soon appeared in the extended cantonments for his troops, and the enlarged comforts of his men. While the French army, cooped up in its intrenched camp, was deprived of all communication on either side by the Adour, and driven for their forage and support upon the vast and desolate *landes* of Bordeaux, traversed only by land carriages, and yielding almost nothing for the support of an army; the British troops, comfortably established in Urrugne, St Jean de Luz, and the other towns on the coast, drew ample supplies from the sea on the one side, and the rich fields of Béarn, the birthplace of Henry IV. and the garden of France, on the other. St Jean de Luz was declared a free port; and by a special proclamation, protection was afforded to all vessels, even French, which had been or might be found in the Nivelle or the Adour, or in any harbours on the coast of France. By these wise and disinterested measures, joined to the admirable discipline

established among his troops, and which he rigorously maintained, and their constant payment for everything in ready money,* Wellington indeed deprived himself of much prize-money, which would otherwise have fallen to his lot; † but he secured ample supplies of all sorts for his soldiers.[1]

[1] Gurw. xi. 396, 423.

60. And beneficial effects of Wellington's stoppage of plunder.

The harbour of St Jean de Luz was speedily crowded with the pendants of all nations, wafting in profusion everything requisite for the maintenance of his army; while the peasants of Béarn brought their produce more regularly to the British market than they had ever done to that of Bayonne. This admirable conduct indeed caused a severe drain upon the British finances, especially

* "I do not believe that the union of the two nations depends on pillage; but if it does, I declare for one, that I desire neither the command nor the continuation of such a bond, founded on plunder. I have lost twenty thousand men in this campaign; and I have not done so in order that either General Murillo, or any other general, should come here to pillage the French peasants; and as long as I command, I will not permit it. If you are resolved to pillage, look out for another commander than me; for as long as I am at your head, I declare aloud I will not permit it. You have large armies in Spain; if you desire to plunder, take away the command from me. Enter France, and I will withdraw into Spain; you know well you would be driven out in fifteen days, having neither magazines, money, nor anything requisite to carry on a campaign. France, rich as it is, would never maintain your troops, if it is given up to plunder; even those who go on the principle of levying contributions to make war maintain war, are well aware that the first thing to do is to stop private disorders. I am the best friend of the soldiers and their real interests, when I prevent them from destroying both by pillage. I could also say something in justification of my conduct on political considerations; but I have said enough, and I repeat it. I am altogether indifferent whether I command a large or a small army; but, be it large or small, it must obey me, and there must be no pillage."—Wellington *to* General Murillo, 24*th Dec.* 1813; Gurwood, xi. 396.

† "The proclamation which I issued, declaring that private property should be respected on entering France, has been applied by their owners to the vessels taken in the Nivelle and the Adour; and though I had not such an application in my contemplation when I issued it, yet, as far as I am concerned, who in personal interest may be considered a principal party, I am desirous for the general good that it should be so applied, and that the owners of these vessels should retain their property. If the law-officers of the crown construe the proclamation otherwise, as applying only to property ashore, I request the authority of his Royal Highness the Prince-Regent to issue another proclamation, to protect the vessels found in the rivers and ports of France belonging to persons remaining in their houses, as described in my proclamation of November last."—Wellington *to* Earl Bathurst, 8*th Jan.*; Gurwood, xi. 423, 424.

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as all the payments required to be made in specie; it threw the army in consequence seven months into arrear, and accumulated debt to an immense amount in every part of the Peninsula. But Wellington and the government had the firmness to adhere to it with scrupulous fidelity under every difficulty, and their constancy was not without its reward. It entirely stopped the growth of a national war in the south of France, which the pillage of the Spaniards at one period was beginning to excite; it sent the conscripts home by thousands from the tricolor standards; and by the striking contrast which it afforded to the ruinous requisitions of Napoleon, contributed to rouse that general indignation at his government, which so soon after hurled him from the throne.[1]

[1] Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Jan. 8, 1814. Gur. xi. 423, 425.

61. Reflections on the battles in front of Bayonne.

The battles in front of Bayonne afford one of the most remarkable examples which the whole annals of war have preserved, of the importance of an interior line of communication, and the prodigious effect which the skilful use of that advantage can produce in the hands of an able general. Like Napoleon around Mantua in 1796, in Dresden in 1813, or in the plains of Champagne in 1814, Soult contrived by means of this circumstance, with an army inferior upon the whole to that of his adversary, to be always superior at the point of attack; and such was the weight of the columns which he thus hurled in succession against different parts of the British force, that he more than once all but gained a decisive advantage, and nearly reft from Wellington the fruits of his whole conquests beyond the Spanish frontiers. This close approximation to success, also, was attained with troops disheartened by long-continued defeat, against an enemy flushed with an unparalleled series of victories, and against a commander who never was outdone in the sagacity with which he divined the intentions of his opponent, and the rapidity with which he moved his forces to counteract them. On the other hand, the ulti-

mate defeat of all these efforts, though planned with the utmost ability, and executed with surpassing gallantry, by a comparatively small body of the Allied troops, proves, what so many other events in the war conspire to demonstrate, that a certain degree of firmness in the generals, and courage in the soldiers, who are thus assailed by the powers of strategy, will often counterbalance all their advantages ; and that it is to the want of these qualities among his opponents, as much as his own genius, that the triumphs of Napoleon in Italy and Champagne are to be ascribed.

62. Reflections on Soult's conduct in the campaign.

Soult's conduct in the campaign, from the time that he assumed the command in the middle of July, was a model, so far as the general direction of its movements is concerned, of vigour and ability ; and probably no other commander in the French army, excepting the Emperor, could, with the same means, have made a resistance equally obstinate and protracted. When it is recollected that when he took the command of the army in the middle of July at Bayonne, he found it routed and disorganised, and in such a state of depression as to be almost unequal to any active operations ; and that in the end of December he was still under the walls of the same fortress, after having, in the intervening period, fought seven pitched battles, and sustained a loss of thirty thousand men, it must be admitted that a more glorious example of tenacious resolution and patriotic resistance is not to be met with in the long and glorious annals of military exploits. His immediate resumption of the offensive, and advance towards Pampeluna, is one of the happiest instances that ever occurred of a defensive, maintained by a vigorous offensive warfare ; and though defeated both then and in the subsequent engagements on the frontier, by the admirable promptitude and moral courage of his antagonist, yet, in prolonging the contest for such a considerable period, he evinced resources of no ordinary kind. In the execution

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of his admirable projects, however, in the actual shock of battle, he did not by any means display the same capacity; and if he had evinced as much vigour at Soraoren on the 26th July, at Bassussary on the 10th, or St Pierre on the 13th December, as he showed ability in the previous conception of the movements which led to these battles, the result might have been different, and the British arms have been rolled back with defeat behind the Ebro.

63. Peculiar moral lustre with which England was encircled from the contest.

Divided as the Spanish and English writers will ever be on the share which their respective countrymen had in its triumphs, there is one glory connected with the Peninsular war, which the British empire shares with no other power, and which the biographer of Wellington is entitled to claim as exclusively his own. During all the difficulties of the contest, and in the midst of the almost overwhelming embarrassments which arose from the long continuance and oppressive burdens of the war, England never adopted the odious revolutionary principle of drawing the resources for the contest from the country in which it was carried on; and from first to last firmly, to her own great immediate loss, repudiated the maxim that war should maintain war. Whatever she did, she did with her own forces, and from her own means alone. No ravaged country had to rue the day when her standards appeared upon it; no wasted realm showed where her armies had been; no tears of the fatherless and the widow, mourning cold-blooded massacres, dimmed the lustre of her victories. If disorders occurred, as occur they did, and occur they will, it was against her system of warfare, and despite the utmost efforts of her officers and her chief. With unconquerable constancy, Wellington and the British government adhered to this noble system, in the midst of pecuniary difficulties which would have crushed any other man, and financial embarrassments which would have overwhelmed any other nation. During all this time, Napoleon's generals and

armies were revelling in wealth and affluence, and France itself was enjoying comparatively light taxation, the fruit of the unbounded and systematic extortion which they had long practised in all the countries occupied by their armies. But mark the end of these things, and the final opposite effect of the gains of oppression and the rule of justice upon the fortunes of nations. Napoleon, driven with disgrace behind the Rhine and the Pyrenees, was unable to protect even the mighty empire he ruled from the aroused and universal indignation of mankind; while Wellington, commencing from small beginnings, at length burst, with an overwhelming force, through the mountain barrier of the south, liberated the whole Peninsula from the oppressor's yoke, and planted his victorious standards, amidst the blessings of a protected and grateful people, on the plains of France.

## CHAPTER LXXXIV.

### EUROPE IN ARMS AGAINST FRANCE. NOV. 1813—JAN. 1814.

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1813.

1. Prodigious results of the campaign of 1813.

THE astonishing results of the campaign of 1813 appeared more fully when the crash of arms was over, and the alternations of hope and fear no longer distracted the mind from the contemplation of the revolution which it had effected. When the campaign had terminated—when the remains of the Grand Army, mournful and defeated, had wended their way across the Rhine, and the once triumphant Peninsular hosts, refluent through the passes of the Pyrenees, had finally abandoned the fields of Spain—the magnitude of the change was such, that it seemed beyond the power of any earthly forces, how great soever, to have effected it. Little more than three months had elapsed since four hundred thousand French, flushed with recent victory, were grouped round the fortresses of the Elbe; while two hundred thousand, proud of their expulsion of the British from the plains of Castile, were prepared to maintain on the Tormes or the Ebro the dominion of the Peninsula. Of this immense host not more than eighty thousand had regained the left bank of the Rhine, and hardly as many remained to arrest the invader on the Adour and amid the Pyrenees. The remainder had sunk under the sword of the enemy, wasted away under the horrors of the bivouac and the hospital, or were shut up, without a hope of escape, in the German fortresses. The few who had regained their

native land bore with them the seeds of contagion, and a sadness of feeling, which rendered their presence a source of weakness rather than of strength to their suffering countrymen. The vast and splendid fabric of the French empire had disappeared like a dream. Its external influence, its foreign alliances, had vanished; the liberated nations of Europe, amidst shouts of triumph and songs of gratulation, were crowding in arms to overwhelm its remains; and the mighty victor, reft of all his conquests, was left with no greater resources than the old monarchy of Louis, now nearly drained of its military defenders, to make head against so many iron bands, whom former wrongs had roused to resistance, and recent heroism led to victory.

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2. Approaching trial of the Revolutionary forces by misfortune.

The forces of the Revolution had hitherto basked only in the sunshine of prosperity. So feeble and ill-concerted had been the assault of the European powers in 1793, that even the tumultuary arrays which the fervour of the Convention had called forth, and the guillotine of the Committee of Public Salvation had retained at their standards, were sufficient to repel them; and the hydra, which might with ease have been crushed in its cradle, was permitted to grow up till it had encircled every monarchy of Europe in its folds. But the period had now arrived when this long career of prosperity was to be succeeded by a still more striking train of adverse fortune—when the forces of Europe, instead of being arrayed with France against England, were to be arrayed with England against France; when disaster, long-continued and universal, was to break in pieces the vast supremacy of former times; and when the iron was to enter into the soul, not merely of the sinking nation, but of every family and individual of which it was composed. This, then, was the real test of the strength and constancy of the Revolution. The time had come when the passions of success were no longer to animate, the blaze of victory no longer to allure; but when the stern approach of

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adversity could be met only by the inherent strength of heroism, or the willing sacrifices of duty. The moment is interesting beyond any other which had occurred in the progress of the contest; for the touchstone was now to be applied to the power, resting on the passions of the world, which had so fearfully shaken those which were based on the fervour of Heaven; and France was to go through the ordeal from whence had issued the spirit which defended the ramparts of Saragossa, and the devotedness which fired the torches of Moscow.

3. Return of Napoleon to Paris, and his first measures there. Nov. 9.

Napoleon set out for Paris from Mayence early in November, and arrived at St Cloud on the 9th of that month. For the second time within the year, he had reached his capital defeated and forlorn, with his army lost, his power shaken, and his glory dimmed. But how disastrous soever the circumstances of his empire were, the energy of the Emperor was equal to the emergency. His first care was to convoke the Council of State; and

Nov. 10.

to them he made a candid and true statement of the magnitude of his losses, and the necessity of vigorous measures to avert the dangers by which they were threatened. To them also he communicated the terms—which will be immediately mentioned—on which the Allied Sovereigns at Frankfort had declared their willingness to treat for peace. The Council, consisting of the Secretaries of State, Talleyrand and Molé, implicitly adopted the views of the Emperor—which were in themselves obviously well founded—that, in the emergency which had arisen, it was indispensable to have recourse to a dictatorship, and that vast sacrifices must be demanded of France. The Emperor set the first example of such a sacrifice, by ordering thirty millions of francs (£1,200,000) to be taken from his vaults in the Tuileries for the public service. He speedily, also, gave earnest of what he expected of his subjects, and of the dictatorial power he was about

Nov. 11.

to assume, by issuing of his own authority, and without any legislative sanction, a decree by which thirty addi-

tional centimes, that is, nearly a third, was added to the land, window, and door tax; the personal tax on moveables was doubled, and three-fifths were added to the excise duties and the salt tax. Although these additions to the taxes were plainly illegal, as wanting any legislative sanction, even according to the shadow of constitutional freedom which remained to France under the imperial regime, they were the only means which remained of replenishing the public treasury, which, from the cessation of all external requisitions, and the enormous expenses of the late campaign, was totally exhausted. The confiscation of the funds of the municipalities and the hospitals of the poor, decreed at the beginning of the year,[1] had not produced half the sum expected, as few purchasers could be found; and even what was got had been altogether drained away. Public credit was ruined; the three per cents were at forty-five; the bank shares of one thousand francs at three hundred and four; and no capitalist could be found in France who would advance the government five pounds.[2]

[1] *Ante*, ch. lxxiv. § 76.

[2] Decree, Nov. 11, 1813, in Cap. x. 298. Fain, M.S. de 1814, p. 1.

4. General and intense discontent which was accumulating in France.

But, however indispensable these illegal stretches might be to provide funds for the immediate necessities of the state, they were by no means acceptable to the nation; and the time had now come when the unparalleled disasters of the last two years, and the continual drain which the taxes and conscription had occasioned on the wealth and population of the empire, had produced a general feeling of discontent, which neither the influence of the imperial government could stifle, nor its terrors overawe. The feelings of natural affection had been subdued, and the woful destiny of the young conscripts concealed, so long as success attended the imperial arms, and the continued advance of the armies veiled from observation the sufferings of the soldiers. But when the victories of the empire were at an end, and the armies, instead of moving on to fresh conquests, were thrown back with terrific slaughter on their own frontiers; when

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no marshal's baton in distant prospect could allure the young conscript, but the gloom of the hospital, or the starvation of the bivouac, rose up in grim array to terminate his career in a few months; when relief from domestic taxation, and the means of foreign aggrandisement, were no longer to be attained by the advance of their conquering arms to hitherto untouched fields of plunder, but increase of burdens, and the prospect of themselves suffering from pillage, were imminent from the threatening hosts which were ready to pour into their territory, or their refluent armies retiring from scenes of defeat; the minds of the people were of necessity turned into a new direction, and they became sensible of the real tendency and necessary effects of the imperial government.[1]

[1] Lab. ii. 3, 4. Cap. x. 2, 3.

5. Striking indications of it in Paris.

A general feeling of horror, accordingly, especially at the conscription and the excise taxes, now became general in the community: the opinion spread widely that the war was endless, and its exhaustion insupportable; the unbending character and known ambition of the Emperor seemed to preclude all hope of a termination being put to it, save by the destruction of France itself; and wishes in secret were formed for a change of government, as the only means of escaping from such a multitude of evils. Several pieces containing lines which might be applied to existing circumstances, were prohibited, in consequence, from being represented at the public theatres; defamatory couplets* were circulated, and eagerly received in society; and one in particular, found affixed in the Place Vendôme to the pedestal of the column of Austerlitz, which then was adorned with the statue of the Emperor on its summit, had an inscription terribly characteristic of the feeling of the time.[2] It bore, that if the blood which he had shed were collected together in that square, it

[2] Cap. x. 2, 4. Lab. ii. 3, 5.

* Such as, "Napoleon est mauvais jardinier; car il a laissé géler ses grenadiers, et flêtrir ses lauriers." The "Tableau Parlant" was prohibited at the theatres for fear of the application of the line, "Il avait autrefois fait des conquêtes, ce qu'aujourd'hui il ne peut pas."—See CAPEFIGUE.

would reach his lips, so that he might drink it without stooping his head.*

It was not surprising that this feeling of horror should have pervaded the community of France; for the calamities which had now fallen upon the army, in consequence of the disastrous issue of the late campaign, were extreme. On returning to Paris, Napoleon had inserted a statement in the *Moniteur*, that the reorganisation of the army was rapidly advancing; that the marshals had received reinforcements to enable them to maintain impregnable the barrier of the Rhine; that the artillery had repaired its losses; the National Guards were crowding into the fortresses; and that all the efforts of the Allies would be shattered against that bulwark of art and nature. But in the midst of all this seeming confidence, the real state of the army on the frontier was very different; and disaster, wide-spread and unparalleled, had overtaken the shattered remains of the host which had wended its way back from the Elbe. Though the country through which that retreat had been conducted was rich and cultivated, the season temperate, and the marches not in general of unusual length, yet the deplorable effects of Napoleon's system of carrying on war without magazines, or provision of any kind for a retreat, had reduced the troops to the most woful state of destitution. The first corps which passed along the road consumed everything on its line, and within reach of the stragglers on either side, to the distance of several miles; and those which came after, as on the Moscow retreat, could find nothing whatever whereon to subsist. Magazines there were none, except at Erfurth, between the Elbe and the Rhine, a distance of

6. Deplorable state of the army on the Rhine.

* "Tyran! juché sur cette chaise,
Si le sang que tu fis verser
Pouvait tenir en cette place,
Tu le boirais sans te baisser."

Another inscription, in huge letters, was found in the morning affixed to the Tuileries—"Fonds à vendre—Pas cher—Fabrique de Sires."—CAPEFIGUE, x. 4.

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above two hundred miles; and the supplies in that city only maintained the troops during the two days that they rested within its walls. During the fifteen days that the retreat lasted, the men were left to search for subsistence as they best could, along an already wasted and exhausted line. The consequence was, that they straggled from necessity over the whole country, and arrived on the Rhine half-starved, in the deepest dejection, bearing with them the seeds of a frightful epidemic, which soon proved more fatal even than the sword of the enemy.[1]

[1] Lab. ii. 3, 5. Cap. x. 237, 239.

7. Terrible epidemic which broke out among them.

Nothing could exceed the astonishment of the inhabitants of the left bank of the Rhine, who had hitherto known war only by its excitement and its glories, when they beheld this woful crowd, pouring back by the bridge of Mayence into the French territory, and spreading like a flood over the whole country. But their number was so considerable, that even the zeal and charity of the inhabitants, which were exerted to the utmost, were unable to provide any effectual remedy for their distresses. In the fortified towns, where the great mass of the fugitives, armed and unarmed, found a refuge, their situation, though at first superior, was ere long still more deplorable. The dreadful typhus fever which they brought with them from the scenes of their suffering in the German plains, soon spread to such a degree among the exhausted crowds who sought shelter within the walls, that in a few days not only the greater part of the military, but a large proportion of the citizens, were prostrate on the bed of sickness. The churches, the hospitals, the halls of justice, the private houses, were soon filled with a ghastly and dying multitude, among whom the worst species of fever spread its ravages, and dysentery wore down attenuated forms to the lowest stage of weakness. Such was the mortality, that for several weeks at Mayence it reached five hundred a-day. The exhalations arising from so great a multitude of dead bodies, which all the efforts of the inhabitants could not succeed in

burying, were such that they ere long poisoned the atmosphere, and spread an insupportable and pestilential odour through the whole city. The churchyards and ordinary places of sepulture being soon overcharged, and interment in coffins out of the question, from the multitude of dead bodies which abounded on all sides, they were thrown promiscuously into vast trenches dug in the public cemeteries, which were rapidly heaped up to a height exceeding that of the walls enclosing them. When this resource failed, they were consigned to the Rhine, the stream of which wafted them down, as from a vast field of carnage, to the German Ocean. Meanwhile, the shores of the Baltic were polluted by the corpses, which, borne by the waters of the Elbe, the Oder, and the Vistula, from the vast charnel-houses which the fortresses on their banks had become, told of the last remains and final punishment of the external government of the Revolution.[1] *

[1] Lab. ii. 6, 7. Cap. x. 297. Bign. xii. 422.

8. Great levies of conscripts in the autumn of 1813 in France.

The internal administration of Marie Louise, as Regent, after the departure of the Emperor for the German campaign, had been sombre and monotonous, little calculated either to distract the attention, or dispel the increasing anxieties, of the people. She went through, with docility, all the external forms which were required by her elevated situation ; and, incapable of apprehending either the duties or the perils with which it was attended, submitted with the same impassable temper to the unbounded flatteries with which she was surrounded, as to the fearful demands she was compelled to make on the blood of her subjects. In August she obtained a temporary respite from the formal duties which oppressed her in the capital, by a journey to Cherbourg, where she had the gratification of beholding the last stone put to that vast construction, partly built, partly excavated from the solid granite, which, commenced by the patriotic

* See *Tableau des Hôpitaux pendant la Dernière Campagne de Napoléon.* Par J. B. A. Hapde, Ex-directeur des Hôpitaux Militaires. Paris, 1815.

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spirit of Louis XVI., and continued by the unwearied perseverance of Napoleon, was destined to rival the noble harbours on the opposite coast, from whence the fleets of the proud Albion issued forth to give law to the waves. The little feet of the Empress were the last which pressed the solid granite of the basin before the new element was let in. But sterner duties soon awaited her. Immediately after her return to Paris, she was made the organ by which the Emperor demanded a conscription of thirty thousand men from the southern departments; and, a month after, another of two hundred and eighty thousand from the whole empire, which were immediately voted by the senate—in all three hundred and ten thousand. They were ordered to be taken in the following proportions; viz. one hundred and twenty thousand from the class attaining the legal age in 1814 and the preceding years, and the remainder from those reaching that age in 1815—in other words, who were *two years under* the legal age of nineteen to twenty-one. So vast had been the consumption of life in the French army, even anterior to the overthrow of Leipsic, in the disastrous campaigns on the Elbe and in the Pyrenees, and so fearful the inroads which the insatiable ambition of the Revolution had now made upon the blood and strength of the empire, that the military population of the proper age was exhausted, and additional troops could be raised only by seizing upon youths of seventeen and eighteen years old, hardly capable of bearing arms, and altogether unfit to withstand the fatigues of a campaign.[1]

Sept. 7.

Oct. 10.

[1] Decrees, Sept. 7 and Oct. 10, 1813. Moniteur, and Goldsmith's Recueil, vi. 517, and 386. Cap. x. 248, 249.

9. Napoleon's speech in the Council of State. Nov. 10.

These ample supplies of men, however, were wholly insufficient to meet the wants of the empire, after the disasters of Leipsic had thrown them back behind the Rhine, and the invasion of Wellington had laid bare the defenceless condition of the southern frontier. In the Council of State, the day after his arrival, Napoleon unfolded the danger of his situation with manly sincerity,

and enforced his demands with nervous eloquence. "Why," said he, "should we fear to speak the truth? Has not Wellington invaded the south? Do not the Russians menace the north? What shame! and the nation does not rise in a mass to chase them away. All my allies have abandoned me: the Saxons betrayed me on the field of battle; the Bavarians endeavoured to cut off my retreat. Never talk of peace till I have burned Munich. The same triumvirate which partitioned Poland has arrayed itself against France: we can have no truce till it is defeated. I demand three hundred thousand men: with what remains of my armies, I shall then have a million of soldiers. Councillors, what we require is energy: every one should march: you are the chiefs of the nation; it is for you to give an example of courage. Every one speaks of peace; that word alone strikes my ear, while everything around us should resound with the cry of war!" [1]

[1] Lab. ii. 8, 9.

10. Decree ordering a levy of 300,000 men. Nov. 15.

On the day following the senate was assembled, and the fresh demand on the Emperor's part of three hundred thousand men was brought forward by the orator of government, Fontanes, whose brilliant elocution and sounding periods were well calculated to throw a deceitful veil over the devouring requisitions of the Revolution. Napoleon's own words breathed a nobler spirit—"A year ago," said he, "all Europe marched with us; at present, it all marches against us: that is because the opinion of the world is formed by France or England. We should, then, have everything to fear but for the power and energy of the nation. Posterity shall admit that, if great and critical circumstances were presented, they were not above France and me." The levy required was decreed as soon as the project was presented: it was ordered to be taken, not as in former cases, by anticipation from the young men who would arrive at the age liable to the conscription in succeeding years, but by *retrospect* from the classes who had undergone the ordeal of the con-

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scription in former years, from 1803 downwards. Thus, within little more than two months, successive levies were demanded from the French people, now reduced almost to their ancient limits, of more than six hundred thousand men: an awful proof of the consumption of human life occasioned in their last stages by the wars of the Revolution. The change in the classes declared liable to the conscription is very remarkable. It indicates the consciousness of government of the arrival of the period when the dreadful destruction of life by the campaigns of 1793 and 1794, had rendered it impossible to draw additional supplies from the young men born in these or the succeeding years, and when it had become indispensable to recur to those who had come into being before the Revolutionary scythe had begun to sweep away at once the strength of one generation and the hopes of the next.[1] *

[1] Decree, Nov. 15, 1813. Moniteur, and Goldsmith's Recueil, vi. 541.

11. Napoleon resolves to abandon the line of the Rhine.

Preparations to resist the dreaded invasion were immediately ordered by Napoleon. Engineers were despatched to the principal fortresses on the northern frontier, with instructions to repair the walls, arm the ramparts, fortify the bridges and passes, and make every possible preparation for a vigorous defence. But when they arrived there, and became acquainted, by ocular inspection, with the deplorable state and reduced numbers of the army, as well as the total want of any preparation, either in the way of magazines, provisions, or artillery, for putting the frontier fortresses in a state of defence, they were soon convinced that it was altogether impossible to think of defending the line of the Rhine. That great frontier stream, above five hundred miles in length, extending from the foot of the Alps to the sands of Holland, strongly studded with fortresses, presented, indeed, a most formidable line of defence, if guarded by

* See Chap. LXXIV. § 71 *et seq.*, where the effect of the conscription on the male population of France—a most curious and interesting subject—is fully discussed.

three or four hundred thousand men. But it was altogether impossible to maintain it with sixty or seventy thousand soldiers, worn out with fatigue, depressed by defeat, with a frightful contagion thinning their ranks, and no magazines to replenish their military stores. It was resolved, therefore, to make no attempt to defend the frontier river, but to fall back at all points across the Vosges mountains. But the Allies were not aware of this resolution; they were ignorant of the weakness and losses of the French army, and paused before the majestic stream which had so long been the frontier of their empire, when they needed only to have crossed it to have wrested from the enemy, without firing a shot, nearly a third of France.[1]

[1] Fain, Camp. de 1814, 2, 3, Lab. ii. 10, 11.

12. Alarming fermentation and discontent in the interior of France.

Serious, however, as were the external dangers which menaced the empire, they were neither the only ones, nor the most pressing, which awakened the anxiety of the Emperor. The fermentation in the interior was still more alarming; and it had now become painfully evident that the Revolutionary government, deprived of the stimulus of external success, was tottering to its fall. The correspondences of the prefects over all France at that period were very remarkable, and clearly bespoke the agitation and uncertainty of the public mind. The conscription in particular excited universal apprehension, extending, as it now did, not only to those who arrived at the legal age in the course of the year, but to those who had attained that age during the ten preceding years, and who had hitherto deemed themselves secure from further molestation; while the enormous increase of the excise and assessed taxes, which practically amounted to more than a half, diffused universal consternation. The alarm on this last account was the greater, that these duties were now levied by the sole authority of the Emperor. Already the price of a substitute for the army had risen to four or five hundred pounds;[2] the last conscription at once doubled it, and in some instances as much as twelve

[2] Moniteur, Nov. 16, 1813. Lab. ii. 10, 11. Cap. x. 250, 254.

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hundred were given. Families of respectability spent their whole property, the savings of a long lifetime, to save their sons from destruction. It was universally understood, what in truth was the fact, that the purchasing of a substitute for the conscription, was bribing one man to sacrifice his life for another.

13. Extraordinary and increasing severity to the conscripts.

In proportion as the dangers of military service increased, desertion from the ranks of the conscripts became more frequent, and its punishment more severe; the prefects were incessantly occupied in enforcing the laws with the utmost rigour against refractory conscripts. Long files of them were everywhere to be seen marching along the roads to their places of punishment, with haggard visages, downcast eyes, and a four-and-twenty pound shot chained to their ankles. Great numbers, especially in the mountain districts, driven to desperation by the alternative of such a punishment, or death in the field or in the hospitals, fled to the hills and formed roving bands, which subsisted by plunder, and already bade defiance to the gendarmes and local authorities. Alarmed at the accounts he received from all quarters of this growing disaffection, the Emperor adjourned the meeting of the Chamber of Deputies, which, by a decree dated from Gotha during the retreat from Leipsic, stood summoned for the 1st December, to the 19th of that month, in the hope that in the interim the negotiations which had commenced with the Allies at Frankfort might have taken a favourable turn, and that he might be able to present some prospect at least to satisfy the universal desire which was felt for peace. At the same time, to prevent the general discontent from affecting the voice of the deputies, a decree was passed by the senate, vesting, in defiance of the constitution, the nomination of President of the Chamber in the Emperor, and prorogating the seat of such of the deputies as had expired, and required to be filled up anew, so as to prevent any new elections in the present disturbed state of the public mind.[1]

[1] Cap. x. 250, 257. Lab. ii. 10, 11. Decree, Nov. 15, 1813. Goldsmith, vi. 545; and Moniteur, Nov. 16.

While France was thus reaping, in the utter prostration of public credit, the entire exhaustion of the blood of the nation, and the universal anxiety which prevailed, the natural consequence of domestic revolution and external aggression, England exhibited at the same period a memorable example of the very opposite effects, flowing from a strictly conservative system of government, and affording a proof of the almost boundless extent of the resources which a country at once orderly and free can develop, during the most protracted and arduous struggle, if its finances and currency are regulated on proper principles. Parliament assembled in the beginning of November; and the speech from the throne dwelt with marked, but not undeserved, emphasis upon the extraordinary successes which had signalised the last memorable campaign, and concluded with the important declaration, "that no disposition to require from France sacrifices of any description, inconsistent with her honour or just pretensions as a nation, will ever be, on the part of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, or his allies, an obstacle to the conclusion of peace." The address in answer, moved by the adherents of ministers, was agreed to in both houses without a dissenting voice; so wonderfully had the glorious concluding successes of the war stilled, both in the legislature and the nation, the furious passions which tore both at its commencement. Lord Liverpool, the prime minister, declared, that in considering the conditions of a general pacification, "It would be the policy of England to give full security, not only to her friends, but to her enemies; and that the cabinet would not countenance any demand from them, which, in their situation, they would not be willing to concede." [1]

14. Opening of the British Parliament, and pacific declarations of the Prince Regent.

[1] Parl. Deb. xxvii. 22, 42. Ann. Reg. 1813, 200, 201.

Though the language of government, however, was thus pacific, yet, like prudent statesmen, who know that the olive branch is in vain tendered with one hand, if the sword is not at the same time held unsheathed in the other, they not only admitted no relaxation in their war-

15. Naval and military preparations of Great Britain.

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like efforts, but made preparations for carrying on the contest on a still more colossal scale than in the preceding campaign. A hundred and forty thousand men, including thirty-one thousand marines, were voted for the sea service; the ships of the line in commission were ninety-nine; the total number of vessels of war, which in that year bore the royal flag, was one thousand and three, of which no less than two hundred and thirty-one were of the line, and six hundred and forty-four of all classes were in commission. The regular land forces consisted of two hundred and thirty-seven thousand men, and the regular militia of eighty-three thousand — all of which were obtained by voluntary enrolment; besides two hundred and eighty-eight thousand local militia, who were raised by conscription from the population of the British islands.* The land forces in India were two hundred thousand, and forty thousand militia in Canada were under arms, and actively and bravely engaged with the enemy; so that England, in this, the twenty-first year of the war, carried on hostilities with, in all, ONE MILLION AND FIFTY-THREE THOUSAND MEN IN ARMS.[1]

[1] Parl. Deb. xxvii. 86, 87. Ann. Reg. 1813, 202, 203.

16. Its whole immense forces were raised by voluntary enlistment.

It is not the least surprising circumstance of these marvellous times that, with the exception of the local militia, which were embodied only for a few weeks in the year, and the persons composing which never permanently left their homes, the whole of this immense force was raised by voluntary enrolment. Three or four candidates were to be found applying for every vacancy in the Indian army; and the casualties of the British army in Europe,

| | |
|---|---|
| * Sailors and Marines, | 140,000 |
| Regular Army, | 237,000 |
| Regular Militia, | 83,000 |
| Yeomanry Cavalry, | 65,000 |
| Local Militia, | 288,000 |
| Native Indian Army, | 200,000 |
| Militia in Canada, | 40,000 |
| | 1,053,000 |

—LORD CASTLEREAGH'S *Speech, Nov.* 11, *Ann. Reg.* 1813, 203; and *Parl. Deb.* xxvii. 86, 87.

which amounted to twenty-five or thirty thousand annually, were entirely filled up by enlistment, or volunteering from the regular militia — a system which had been attended with the very best effects, and which had yielded, in the last six years, no less than a hundred thousand admirable soldiers to the troops of the line. To extend and improve upon this disposition, a bill was passed early in this session of Parliament, authorising twenty-seven thousand men to be raised by volunteering from the militia, in one year; a measure which, with the ordinary recruiting, which was taken at sixteen thousand, would produce at least forty thousand men to meet the wants of the approaching campaign. By such gentle means was the stupendous force brought together, which now carried on the war victoriously in every quarter of the globe, and with so small a consumption of life were the victories gained, which now shook to its centre the iron empire of France.[1]

[1] Lord Castlereagh's speech, Nov. 11, 1813. Parl. Deb. xxvii. 86, 87. Ann. Reg. 1813. 202, 203.

17. Enormous expense of the year.

But this immense force could only be maintained by a proportional expenditure; and, great as had been the financial efforts of Great Britain during the former year, they were yet exceeded by the colossal exertions of the present. The cost of the army alone, ordinary and extraordinary, rose to the enormous amount of thirty-three millions, besides four millions and a half for the ordnance; the navy required nearly twenty-two millions; and the interest on the national debt and exchequer bills, with the sinking fund, was no less than forty-three millions. The loans to Continental states were ten millions; eight millions were advanced to Ireland; and altogether the expenditure of the year reached the enormous amount of ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTEEN MILLIONS. The necessity of carrying on the war with the utmost vigour, at once by land and sea, both in Europe and America, from the coincidence of the near termination of the Continental with the commencement of the Transatlantic contest; the vast expense of the campaign in the south of France,

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at the same time that the war was prosecuted by British troops in the Netherlands, and all the armies of Europe were arrayed in British pay on the banks of the Rhine, sufficiently explain the causes of this vast expenditure. Certainly no policy could have been so short-sighted, even in a financial point of view, as that which at such a crisis would have hesitated at straining every nerve to improve to the utmost the advantages already gained, and bring the contest to an immediate and glorious termination.[1] *

[1] Budget for 1814. Ann. Reg. 1815, p. 342; and Parl. Deb. xxx. i. ii. App.

18. Prodigious sums provided for the service of the year.

But if it is easy to assign the causes of the vast expenses of the last year of the war, it is a very different matter to explain how the nation was able to bear it; and in truth, of all the marvels of this period, the most marvellous is the way in which funds were provided by the British empire for the gigantic expenditure of the concluding years of the war. When we recollect that the finances of France, supported as they still were by the industry of forty-two millions of persons, and aided as they had so long been by the contributions levied from one half of Europe, were at this period utterly bankrupt, and that it was only by the aid of the great reserved fund, the fruit of imperial smuggling, in the vaults of the Tuileries, that the most pressing demands on the treasury could be met; we are at a loss to conceive how it was possible for the British empire, with a population not then, including Ireland, quite reaching eighteen millions, by any means to have raised the enormous funds which were annually poured into the public treasury. Yet no difficulty whatever was experienced in this particular. The permanent revenue for the year 1814 amounted to nearly forty-four, the war taxes to thirty millions sterling; thirty-six millions were raised by loan, including that provided for Ireland; and the ways and means reached altogether the enormous sum of ONE HUNDRED AND ELEVEN MILLIONS, independent of above six mil-

* See Appendix, A, Chap. LXXXIV.

lions, which were annually raised from the landed property of England for the support of the poor. But this marvel, great as it is, is much enhanced when it is recollected, that such was the unshaken credit and inexhaustible capital of Great Britain, that these prodigious loans were raised, in this the twenty-first year of the war, at the low rate of £4, 12s. 1d. of annual interest; and that even on these reduced terms, such was the competition of the lenders, and rise of the funds and scrip, at the time the bidding was going forward, that no less than a million of stock was thereby saved to the public —the lenders being inscribed for so much stock in the five and three per cents, and immense fortunes were realised to lucky contractors.[1]*

[1] Parl. Deb. xxviii. 66, 67; and xxx. App. 2-5; and Ann. Reg. 1813, 34.

19. General surprise at this extraordinary financial wealth of Great Britain.

The Continental writers, struck with astonishment at this growing and expansive power in the British finances, which no demands, how great soever, were able to exhaust, have generally concurred in referring it to the effect of the war itself, which secured to the English merchants the commerce of all civilised nations, and rendered London the centre of the wealth, not only of the British empire, but of the whole globe. English writers, equally amazed at this extraordinary phenomenon, have sought an explanation of it in the great addition which at this period was made to British industry, by the introduction of the steam-engine, and the vast improvements introduced into the machinery for cotton manufacture; and have repeated again and again the striking observation, that James Watt stood forth the real conqueror of Napoleon.† Without disputing, however, that these

* See Appendix, B, Chap. LXXXIV.

† James Watt was the inventor of the steam-engine, and as such has deservedly acquired immortal renown. But so great and rapid have been the improvements effected by British genius on the application of that wonderful engine to the purposes of manufacture since that time, that it may be doubted whether subsequent mechanical philosophers have not had as large a share as the illustrious Scottish sage in the production of the marvellous and complicated machinery which now sustains the vast fabric of British manufacturing industry. Among the authors of these improvements, the chief places must be

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causes had a material effect in counteracting the influence of the many circumstances which, during the progress of the contest, had at various periods tended so powerfully to depress the springs of British industry, it may safely be affirmed, that the influence of this concentration of foreign commerce, and growth of manufacturing industry, has been much overrated, and that it is in other causes that the true solution of this extraordinary phenomenon is to be found.

20. It was not owing to the trade produced by the war.

The coincidence of the American Non-importation Act, passed in February 1811, with the exclusion of British commerce from almost the whole Continent by the Berlin and Milan decrees, had reduced the British exports to a most alarming degree in that year; and though the opening of the Baltic harbours by the war of 1812, and of those of Germany and the Adriatic by that of 1813, had a powerful effect in counteracting these causes of depression, yet the closing of the North American market, which took off, even at that period, manufactured goods to the amount of fourteen millions annually, had a most prejudicial effect upon every branch of industry. Neither the exports nor imports, accordingly, of 1812 or 1813, had equalled what they had previously been in 1809 and 1810; and those who are accustomed to refer the stupendous financial efforts of Great Britain at the close of the war, to the monopoly enjoyed at that period by British commerce, which has been since shared with other nations, or the vast recent growth of its cotton manufactures,

assigned to Sir Richard Arkwright and Samuel Crompton, Esq. The former realised a princely fortune from his inventions; the latter, to whom the cotton manufacture is perhaps still more indebted, received a gift of £5000 from parliament, as an honorary mark of distinction for his services to his country. The result of these splendid inventions has been, that in seventy years the cotton consumed in the fabrics of Great Britain has increased from 3,000,000 lb., to 500,000,000 lb.; the persons employed in them have swelled from 60,000 to 1,300,000, and the official value of British manufactured cotton goods exported from Great Britain, which in 1751 was only £45,956, had risen in 1810 to £17,898,519, and in 1833 to the amazing amount of £46,337,210.—See BAINES' *History of the Cotton Manufacture*, p. 350—a most interesting and valuable work.

will be probably surprised to learn that at that period our exports and our imports were not more than a third of what they have since become; that our tonnage little exceeded a half of what it now is; and that the population of the empire was twelve millions less than the amount which it has attained at this time, (1849.)*

21. Real causes to be found in the heroic spirit and energy of the nation.

The true explanation of these extraordinary and unparalleled phenomena is to be sought for, not in any casual or accidental circumstances which at that period poured any extraordinary stream of wealth into the British islands, but in the industrious character of their inhabitants, the long protection from foreign aggression which they had enjoyed, the free and yet tempered spirit of their internal constitution, the heroic spirit with which they were animated in the latter years of the contest, and the admirable system of taxation and currency which the wisdom of Mr Pitt had bequeathed to his successors. It is not any casual or passing advantage or monopoly, enjoyed for a few years by its merchants or manufacturers, which can enable a country to maintain a war for twenty years with the most powerful nations in the world, and in its concluding years to spend from a hundred and ten to a hundred and twenty millions annually, without raising the rate of interest or exhausting its national resources. Centuries of pacific exertion, the accumulations of long-protected industry, the energy of a free constitution, the security of habitual order, an industrious national char-

* Table showing the Population, Exports, Imports, and Tonnage of the British Empire in 1811, 1812, and 1814, and in 1836, 1837, and 1838. Records of 1813 destroyed by fire:—

| Years. | Population of Great Britain and Ireland. | Exports. Official value. | Imports. Declared value. | Tonnage, British and Foreign. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1811 | 17,580,000 | £28,799,120 | £26,510,186 | 2,072,244 |
| 1812 | 17,830,000 | 38,041,573 | 26,163,431 | Records destroyed by fire. |
| 1814 | 18,000,000 | 53,573,234 | 33,755,264 | 1,899,535 |
| 1836 | 26,030,000 | 97,621,549 | 57,230,908 | 3,556,697 |
| 1837 | 26,360,000 | 85,781,669 | 54,737,301 | 3,383,965 |
| 1838 | 26,680,000 | 105,170,549 | 61,268,320 | 4,099,039 |
| 1846 | 28,860,000 | 151,000,000 | 85,000,000 | 6,024,000 |

—PORTER'S *Progress of the Nation*, i, 11, ii. 98, and 174; and *Finance Accounts for* 1840; and PORTER'S *Parl. Tables*, ix. 43, 44.

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acter, the influence of long-established artificial wants, and unbounded natural advantages, at once for agriculture, commerce, and manufactures, as well as a monetary system capable of giving scope to all these favourable circumstances, must combine to produce such an astonishing result.

22. Combination of many causes which produced this result.

England had made good use of this extraordinary combination of advantages during the whole course of the contest. Her industry, constantly protected alike from foreign aggression and domestic spoliation, had flourished amidst the revolutionary devastation or military oppression of other nations; her agriculture, keeping pace with the rapid growth of her population, had even outstripped the wants of the people, and for the first time, for nearly a century, had rendered the empire, in ordinary seasons, independent of foreign supplies of food; while her commerce and manufactures, enjoying a virtual monopoly of all the lucrative intercourse which the dreadful contest that was raging had left to mankind, though inconsiderable in amount to what they have since become, were attended in general with large profits, and occasioned a vast accumulation of wealth in a comparatively small number of hands. Above all, a system of currency was established in the country, which, without being redundant, like the French assignats, was sufficient for the wants of the community, and kept the great moving power of the nation constantly in activity, how great soever the drain of the precious metals to foreign nations, from the necessities of war, had become. But though due weight is by no means to be denied to those concurring circumstances, they were not the most important causes which conspired to produce this extraordinary result: they merely brought to maturity the crop prepared by centuries of previous regulated freedom, protected industry, and natural advantages. And all these causes, powerful as they were, would have failed in producing the result, if they had not been aided at the decisive moment by a noble constancy in the government, and spirit in the

people, which made them face difficulties, and undertake burdens which would have been deemed unbearable in any other age or country, and poured forth the long accumulations of British wealth in the cause of mankind, with a profusion which must ever render this the most glorious and animating period of British history.

23. Propositions of the Allied sovereigns from Frankfort as to a general peace.

While Great Britain and France were thus severally preparing for the final struggle which was to decide the great contest between Revolutionary and Conservative principles, the Allied sovereigns, assembled at Frankfort, adopted a measure which, more than any other, tended to elevate their cause in the estimation of mankind, and to detach from Napoleon the support of the French people. The Baron Saint Aignan, ambassador of France at the court of Saxe Weimar, had been made prisoner during the advance of the Allies to the Rhine, and in the first moment of his capture he had been received with marked kindness by Metternich, who assured him, in the most emphatic terms, of the anxious wish of the Allied powers, and more especially of his own sovereign, for a general peace.* Five days subsequent to their arrival at Frankfort, the Allied leaders sent for the Count, and after again reiterating in person, in the strongest terms, their pacific inclinations, despatched him to Paris with a private letter from the Emperor Francis to his daughter, Marie Louise;[1] and a diplomatic note

Nov. 9. [1] Moniteur, Jan. 20, 1814. Fain, MS. de 1814, 46, 57. Pièces Just. Bign. xiii. 30.

* "'L'Empereur,' dit M. de Metternich à Saint Aignan, 'se fait illusion depuis deux ans. Il a cru faire la paix à Moscow, ensuite il s'est persuadé qu'il la ferait à Dresde. Il a pensé que nous ne ferions la guerre; il a pensé qu'il pourrait garder la position de l'Elbe, même en nous ayant contre lui. Maintenant qui peut prévoir les résultats de cette campagne? Le Duc de Vicence sait qu'il y a entre nous, sous le sceau du secret, un écrit qui pourrait faire la paix en soixante heures. L'Empereur Napoléon l'a accepté à deux articles près. L'Empereur croyait toujours que nous ne ferions pas la guerre. Il supposait que nous n'avions que 150,000 hommes; nous en avions 300,000. Il a fallu lui déclarer la guerre. Dans une conversation de neuf heures, *je l'en avais prévenu cinq fois; mais rien ne pouvait le lui faire croire. Nous voulions sincèrement la paix*, nous la voulions encore, et nous la ferons. Il ne s'agit que d'aborder sincèrement, et sans détours, la question. La Coalition restera unie. Les moyens indirects ne peuvent plus réussir.' *Paroles de* M. De Metternich *à* M. De Saint Aignan."—Bignon, xiii. 24, 25.

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from the whole sovereigns, in which they stated the terms on which they were willing to open negotiations. The basis of these terms was, "that France was to be restricted to its natural limits between the Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees; that Spain should be restored to its ancient dynasty; and that the independence of Italy and Germany should be secured, under princes of their native families.

24. Napoleon's answer.

If these terms were agreed to, M. de Saint Aignan was assured that England would make great sacrifices, and would recognise every liberty of commerce and navigation to which France had any right to pretend, and that nothing hostile to the dynasty of Napoleon would be insisted on. To these propositions Maret

Nov. 16.

replied on the part of the French Emperor, that "a peace concluded on the basis of the independence of all nations, as well in a Continental as in a maritime point of view, had been the constant object of his Majesty's solicitude;" and he specified the city of Mannheim on the right bank of the Rhine, which he proposed should be declared neutral, and made the seat of the negotiations. But he did not say whether or not the French Emperor would accede to the basis proposed, which omission was

Nov. 25.

justly complained of by Metternich in his reply, as rendering nugatory any negotiation which might be commenced. To this Maret replied, that in admitting as

Dec. 2.

the basis of the whole the independence of all nations,

Dec. 10.

the French Emperor had in effect admitted all for which

[1] Bign. xiii. 30, 31.

the Allies contended; and with this explanation Metternich professed himself entirely satisfied.[1]*

Hitherto everything seemed to augur well for the opening of the negotiation; and the better to express the views with which they were animated, the Allied

* Rapport du Baron Saint Aignan, 9th Nov. 1813. Note de Saint Aignan, 9th Nov. Duc de Bassano au Prince de Metternich, 16th Nov. 1813. Réponse de Metternich, 25th Nov. 1813. Lettre de M. le Duc de Vicence au Prince de Metternich, 2d Dec. 1813. Réponse de Metternich, 10 Déc. 1813. All contained in the *suppressed Moniteur* of 20th Jan. 1814, and given in FAIN, *MS. de* 1814, 46-57; *Pièces Justificatives.*

1813.

25. Noble declaration of the Allies from Frankfort.

sovereigns published a declaration, dated Frankfort, 1st December 1813, detailing the principles on which they were willing to treat with Napoleon, and the objects for which the alliance contended. The whole history of the world does not contain a more noble instance of justice and moderation in the moment of triumph than is exhibited in this instrument. "The Allied powers," it declared, "desirous of obtaining a general peace on a solid foundation, promulgate in the face of the world the principles which are the basis and guide of their conduct, their wishes, and their determinations. They do not make war on France, but on that preponderance which, to the misfortune of Europe and of France, the Emperor Napoleon has long exercised beyond the limits of France. They desire that it should be powerful and happy—that commerce should revive and the arts flourish—that its territory should preserve an extent unknown under its ancient kings; because the French power, great and strong, is in Europe one of the fundamental bases of the social edifice—because a great people can only be tranquil so long as they are happy—because a brave nation is not to be regarded as overthrown because in its turn it has experienced reverses in an obstinate and bloody struggle, in which it has combated with its accustomed valour. But the Allied powers wish themselves also to be happy and tranquil—they wish a state of peace which, by a wise division of power, by a just equilibrium, may hereafter preserve their people from the calamities without number which for twenty years have oppressed Europe. They will not lay down their arms before they have attained that great and beneficent result; they will not lay them down till the political state of Europe is of new secured, till the immutable principles of justice have resumed their ascendant over vain pretensions, and till the sanctity of treaties has at length secured a real peace to Europe."[1]

[1] Declaration, Dec. 1, 1813. Ann. Reg. 1813, 442; and Schoell, Recueil, ii. 357. Montg. vii. 278.

When sentiments so elevated and generous were pro-

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26. Napoleon's devices to elude accepting these terms.

mulgated openly by the conquerors, it might reasonably have been expected that the negotiations would have been immediately commenced by the French government; and certainly never was defeated monarch and nation invited in such a way to concur in the general pacification of the world. It is admitted by Caulaincourt, that in making these propositions the Allies were, at that time at least, perfectly sincere, and that if Napoleon had at once closed with them, peace might have been concluded.* Instead of this, however, Napoleon by every art postponed the opening of the negotiations as much as possible; and six weeks after M. de Saint Aignan had been despatched with these pacific overtures, they had not even got the length of plenipotentiaries being named. The basis agreed to by Napoleon was accepted by the Allies on the 10th December, but the letter notifying their acceptance was not even answered by Caulaincourt on the part of France till the 6th January; and before that time arrived, the Rhine was crossed at all points, and the war carried into the French territory. The negotiation, in consequence, only commenced at Chatillon at a later period of the campaign. In truth, Napoleon was desirous only to gain time to complete his defensive preparations in his own dominions; and nothing was further from his intention than to withdraw behind the Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees. His most devoted panegyrists admit this.† Although, too, the other Allied powers were really desirous of an accommodation, yet Alexander in the course of the negotiation became strongly impressed with the idea—which experience soon proved to be well founded—that no real peace was practicable with the French Emperor;[1]

Dec. 10.

Jan. 6.

[1] Metternich to Caulaincourt, Dec. 10, 1813; and Caulaincourt to Metternich, Jan. 6, 1814. Fain, 57, 58. Danilefsky, Camp. de 1814, 2, 3.

* "Les Alliés ont avoué depuis, que si, dès l'instant où l'Empereur connut les bases de Frankfort, il avait fait partir un plénipotentiaire autorisé à les signer, (comme l'avait proposé le Duc de Bassano,) ils n'auraient pas osé se rétracter, ou peut-être ils n'en auraient pas eu l'idée. Mais l'Empereur a perdu ce dernier moment favorable; il a donné aux ennemis le temps de connaître sa situation, et leur a fait naître l'envie d'en profiter."—*Précis des Négociations de Châtillon, par M. le* DUC DE VICENCE; quoted in BIGNON, xiii. 33.

† "Le premier usage que les Alliés on fait de la victoire a été, disent-ils,

and that the wisest policy was to await the course of military events, and not fetter themselves by any engagements which might prove prejudicial, in the event of ulterior success in the great measures which were in preparation. Thus the negotiation which opened under such favourable auspices, came at this time to nothing; for this plain reason, that the views of the leaders on both sides were so much at variance, that the difference between them could be adjusted only by the sword.

27. Opening of the session of the legislative body. Dec. 19.

One reason why Napoleon went, in appearance at least, into this correspondence, was in order to have the benefit of the statement, to lay before the Chamber of Deputies, who were summoned to meet on the 19th December, that negotiations were in progress, without being fettered by any engagement or the acceptance of any distinct basis of peace. That assembly met accordingly at that period; but soon evinced a spirit so refractory, that he found it impossible to carry on the government until they were adjourned. The clamour was too loud, and the spirit of discontent and despair which now prevailed in almost every part of France, too deep-seated and profound, to be either stifled by the seductions, or overawed by the terrors, of the imperial authority. Napoleon opened the session in person, with great pomp. "Splendid victories," said he, "have immortalised the French armies in this campaign; defections without a parallel have rendered those victories unavailing, or turned them against us. France would now have been in danger but for the energy and union of the French. In these momentous circumstances, my first thought has been to summon you around me: my heart has need of the

d'offrir la paix à l'Empereur Napoléon. Leur attitude, renforcée de l'accession de tous les princes d'Allemagne, n'a pas eu d'influence sur les conditions. . . . . C'est en ces termes qu'ils font valoir la faute que l'Empereur vient de commettre en ne donnant pas suite immédiatement à leurs propositions. *Nous ne nions pas cette faute,* toutefois on ne saurait s'empêcher de reconnaître que la gravité en est plutôt relative qu'absolue. Toute la faute de Napoléon c'est de trop compter cette fois sur la durée des dispositions pacifiques de ses adversaires."—BIGNON, xiii. 36.

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presence and affection of my subjects. I have never been seduced by prosperity; adversity will find me superior to its strokes. I have often given peace to the nations when they had lost everything: with a part of my conquests I raised up thrones for monarchs who have since abandoned me. I had conceived and executed great designs for the happiness of the world. A monarch and a father, I feel that peace adds to the security of thrones as well as to that of families. Nothing on my part is an obstacle to the re-establishment of peace; you are the natural organs of the throne; it is for you to give an example of energy which may dignify our generation in the eyes of posterity. Let them not say of us, 'They have sacrificed the first interests of their country; they have submitted to laws which England has sought in vain during four centuries to impose upon France.' I am confident that, in this crisis, the French will show themselves worthy of themselves and of me."[1]

[1] Discours de Nap. Dec. 19, 1813; Moniteur, Dec. 19; and Goldsmith's Recueil, vi. 558.

28. Eloquent speech of Napoleon on this occasion.

M. de Fontanes, the orator of the government, answered in his wonted style of sonorous and dignified eloquence, concluding with the exhortation "to rally round the diadem, where the lustre of fifty victories shines through a passing cloud. Fortune is never long wanting to nations which are not wanting to themselves." Napoleon rejoined:—"I will make, without regret, the sacrifices required by the basis proposed by the enemy; my life has but one object, the happiness of the French. Meanwhile Béarn, Alsace, and Franche-Comté are invaded; the cries of that part of my family agonise my heart; I call the French to the assistance of the French! I call the Frenchmen of Paris, of Brittany, of Normandy, of Champagne, of Burgundy, and of the other departments, to the assistance of their brethren! Shall we abandon them in their misfortune? Peace and the deliverance of our country should be our rallying cry. At the sight of a whole people in arms, the stranger will fly, or sign peace on the terms which he himself has proposed. The

time has gone by when we could think of recovering our conquests." But in the midst of this external homage to the warlike dispositions of the Emperor, there were not wanting men bold enough in private to counsel him to come to a pacification. Caulaincourt strongly urged the immediate adoption of the basis proposed by the Allies at Frankfort, and the publication of this adoption to the people. "Such frankness," said he, "and the confidence shown in the nation, will do more than senatus-consulta and decrees. Courage is not awanting, sire! what is wanted is confidence that it will not be misapplied. When the conditions accepted are known, every one will support them. With the opinion entertained of your character, whatever tends to show that your hands are bound, and that *fortune will make no change in your pretensions*, is of advantage to you. The real danger is not the force of the Allies; it is the dread generally felt that the sacrifices asked to secure a peace will only augment the pretensions which must prolong the war. Proclaim your moderation, sire! and the nation will precipitate itself, as in 1794, to defend the frontiers."[1]

[1] Thib. xi. 468. Moniteur, Dec. 22, 1813. Goldsmith, vi. 57. Bign. xiii. 48.

29. Unexpected and violent opposition which breaks out in the Chamber of Deputies.

It was not long before the Emperor had cause to repent not having followed these wise counsels. In the senate everything went on smoothly, and nothing indicated any distrust of, or opposition to, government. But in the Chamber of Deputies matters soon assumed a very different aspect. Notwithstanding the pains which had been taken by the nomination of a president, Regnier, Duke of Massa, by the Emperor, and the filling up of all the vacant seats, twenty-three in number, by the same authority, instead of by the legal mode of election, it soon appeared that a large party in that assembly were animated with a spirit which it was impossible to control. The first serious business which was committed to the senate and the Chamber was the nomination by each of a committee, to whom the documents connected with the negotiations which had been opened with the Allied

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powers should be submitted. That appointed by the senate, consisting of Talleyrand, Lacépède, Fontanes, and others, entirely in the interest of government, gave no umbrage to Napoleon. But the list circulated by authority for the adoption of the Deputies met with a very different reception. It was rejected by a considerable majority; and a committee appointed instead, consisting of persons, with the exception of one, Lainé, heretofore unknown, and over whom the court possessed little influence. It was easy to foresee, from this commencement, that in the present excited state of the public mind, a contest of a very serious kind awaited the Emperor with his own legislature.[1]

[1] Thib. vi. 468, 469; Montg. vii. 292.

30. Lainé's Report in the Chamber of Deputies. Dec. 28.

In effect, it broke out sooner than could have been anticipated. The committee appointed to consider the diplomatic instruments communicated to them, immediately commenced their labours; and their report, drawn up by Lainé, was presented to the Chamber, in a secret meeting held on the 28th. This report bore that, to prevent the country from becoming the prey of foreigners, it was necessary to nationalise the war; and this could not be done unless the nation and its monarch were united by closer bonds. "It has become indispensable to give a satisfactory answer to our enemies' accusations of aggrandisement. There would be real magnanimity in a formal declaration, that the independence of the French people, and the integrity of its territory, is all that we contend for. It is for the government to propose measures which may at once repel the enemy, and secure peace on a durable basis. These measures would be soon efficacious, if the French nation were persuaded that the government, in good faith, aspired only to the glory of peace, and that their blood would no longer be shed save to defend our country and secure the protection of the laws. But these words of 'peace' and 'country' will resound in vain, if the institutions are not guaranteed which secure these blessings. It appears, therefore, to the commission to be

indispensable that, at the same time that the government proposes the most prompt and efficacious measures for the security of the country, his majesty should be supplicated to maintain entire the execution of the laws, which guarantee to the French liberty and security, and to the nation the free exercise of its political rights.[1]

[1] Thib. ix. 468, 469. Buchez et Roux, Hist. Parl. xxxix. 458.

31. Remarkable statements which it contained.

" The Confederation of the Rhine is an alliance useful only to the Germans: under it a powerful hand secured them independence. If they prefer the chains of Austria, why not abandon them to their desires? As to Holland, since the Allies insist on the conditions of Lunéville, we may withdraw without regret from provinces difficult to preserve, in which the English interest exclusively prevails, and to which the English commerce is the price of existence. Have these countries not been so impoverished by the war, that we have seen patrician families withdraw from them, as if pursued by a devastating scourge, to carry elsewhere their industry and their riches? We have need, without doubt, of courage to make the truth known to our Emperor; but with whatever perils the attempt is attended, we will incur them rather than betray his confidence: we would rather endanger our own lives than the existence of the nation.

32. And frightful picture of the ruin of the country.

" Let us attempt no dissimulation: our evils are at their height; the country is menaced on the frontiers at all points; commerce is annihilated, agriculture languishes, industry is expiring; there is no Frenchman who has not in his family or his fortune some cruel wound to heal. The facts are notorious, and can never be sufficiently brought into view. Agriculture for the last five years has gained nothing; it barely exists, and the fruit of its toil is annually dissipated by the treasury, which unceasingly devours everything to satisfy the cravings of ruined and famished armies. The conscription has become, for all France, a frightful scourge, because it has always been carried into execution with the utmost rigour. For the

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last three years the harvest of death has been reaped three times a-year! a barbarous war without an object swallows up the youth, torn from their education, from agriculture, commerce, and the arts. Have the tears of mothers and the blood of generations thus become the patrimony of kings? It is fit that nations should have a moment's breathing-time; the period has arrived when they should cease to tear out each other's entrails; it is time that thrones should be consolidated, and that our enemies should be deprived of the plea, that we are for ever striving to carry into the whole world the torch of revolution."[1]

[1] Parl. Hist. de France, xxxix. 457, 458.

33. Napoleon resolves to dissolve the Chambers, and his speech to the Council of State.

The reading of this report conjured up a perfect storm in the Chamber. It was so long since the words liberty and political rights had been heard within its walls, that the courtiers started as if high treason had been spoken in their presence. The president Regnier interrupted the report. "Orator," said the nominee of Napoleon, "what you say is unconstitutional."—"In what?" replied he; "there is nothing unconstitutional here but your presence." The debate was adjourned to the 30th, and a majority of four-fifths voted an address to the Emperor, and that Lainé's report should be printed and distributed. Napoleon instantly ordered the printing to be stopped, the proofs already thrown off to be seized, and refused to

Dec. 30.

receive the address. He summoned the Council of State, and thus broke forth:—"Gentlemen, you are aware of the state of affairs, and the dangers of the country. I thought it fit, without being under any obligation so to do, to make a confidential communication to the Chamber of Deputies on the state of the negotiations, because I wished to associate them with my dearest interests. They have taken advantage of that communication to turn an arm against me—that is, against the country. Instead of aiding me by their efforts, they restrain my own. An imposing attitude on our part can alone repel the enemy—theirs attracts him. Instead of presenting

to him a front of brass, they lay bare our wounds: they demand peace with loud cries, when the only possible means of obtaining it is by seconding me in war. They complain of me: they speak of their grievances; but what time, what place, have they chosen for bringing them forward? Is it not *en famille*, and not in presence of the enemy, that they should treat of such subjects? Have I, then, been inaccessible to them? Have I shown myself incapable of listening to reason? Matters have come, however, to such a pass, that a decisive part must be taken. The legislative body, instead of uniting with me to save France, does all it can to precipitate its fall: it betrays its duties; I fulfil mine. I dissolve it."[1]

[1] Thib. ix. 469, 470.

34. His decree dissolving the Chambers.

He then caused a decree to be read, which he proposed to issue, declaring that two-fifths of the legislative body had already exhausted their powers; that another fifth, on the 1st of January, would be in the same situation; and that, therefore, the legislative body was prorogued till the elections were completed. "Such," resumed the Emperor, "is the decree which I propose to issue; and if I were assured that this very day the people of Paris, in a body, were to come to massacre me in the Tuileries, I would not the less persevere in it—for it is my duty. When the French people intrusted me with their destinies, I considered the laws given me to govern them; if I had deemed them insufficient, I would not have accepted the charge. They need not suppose that I am a Louis XVI. When I became Emperor, I did not cease to be a citizen. If anarchy is to be installed anew, I shall abdicate, and mix in the crowd to enjoy my part in the sovereignty, rather than remain at the head of affairs, when I can only endanger all, without protecting any. My determination is conformable to the law: if all would now discharge their duty, I would be invincible behind it in face of the enemy."[2]

[2] Thib. ix. 470, 471.

On the day following, being the 1st January 1814, on

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35. His violent invective against the Chambers at the Tuileries.

occasion of the public reception of the authorities in the Tuileries, Napoleon broke forth in a strain of vehement invective against the legislative body. "Gentlemen," said he, "you have had it in your power to do much good, and you have done nothing but mischief. Eleven-twelfths of you are good, the rest are factious. What do you hope for by putting yourselves in opposition? To gain possession of power? But what are your means for doing so? Are you the representatives of the people? I am so: four times I have been invoked by the nation; and four times I have had the votes of four millions of men for me. I have a title to supreme authority which you have not. You are nothing but the representatives of the departments of the nation. Your commission has been guided by the spirit of the Gironde—M. Lainé is a conspirator, an agent of England, with which he is in correspondence by means of the advocate Desèze; the others are actuated by factious motives. I will keep my eye on M. Lainé: he is a bad man. Your report is drawn up with an astute and perfidious spirit, of the effects of which you are well aware. Two battles lost in Champagne would not have done me so much mischief.

"I have immolated my passions, my pride, my ambition to the good of France. I hoped that you would appreciate my motives, and not urge me to sacrifices inconsistent with the honour of the nation. Far from that, in your report you mingle irony with reproach; you tell me that adversity has given me salutary counsels. How can you reproach me with my misfortunes? I have supported them with honour, because I have received from nature a strong and indomitable character; and if I had not possessed that ardent temperament of mind, I would never have raised myself to the first throne in the world. Nevertheless, I have need of consolation, and I expected it from you: so far from giving it, you have endeavoured to cover me with

mire. But I am one of those men whom you may kill, but cannot dishonour. Is it by such reproaches that you expect to restore the lustre of the throne? What is the throne? Four pieces of gilded wood covered with a piece of velvet. The real throne has its seat in the nation: you cannot separate the two without mutual injury; for the nation has more need of me than I have of the nation. What could it do without a chief and without a guide? When the question was how we could repel the enemy, you demanded institutions, as if we had them not! Are you not content with the constitution? If you are not so, you should have told me so four years ago, or postponed your demand till two years after a general peace. Is this the moment to insist on such a demand?

"You wish to imitate the Constituent Assembly, and commence a revolution? Be it so. You will find I shall not imitate Louis XVI. I would rather abandon the throne—I would prefer making part of the sovereign people to being an enslaved king. I am sprung from the people: I know the obligations I contracted when I ascended the throne. You have done me much mischief: you would have done me still more, if I had allowed your report to be printed. You speak of abuses, of vexations—I know as well as you that such have existed: they arose from circumstances and the misfortunes of the times. But was it necessary to let all Europe into our secrets? Is it fitting to wash our dirty linen in public, instead of in the privacy of our families? In what you say there is a mixture of truth and falsehood. What, then, was your obvious duty? To have confidentially made known your grounds of complaint to me, by whom they would have been thankfully received: I do not love those who have oppressed you more than you yourselves do. In three months we shall have peace: the enemy will be chased from our territory, or I shall be dead. We have greater resources than you

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imagine: our enemies have never conquered us—never shall. They will be chased across the frontier more quickly than they have entered it." The dissolution of the Chambers immediately followed this violent apostrophe, which paints the character of Napoleon better than volumes of ordinary history. Although, however, he had been so vehement in his menaces, and had denounced M. Lainé, in particular, as sold to England and a traitor to his country, yet no arrests or measures of severity followed. The Deputies retired without molestation to their departments; and the Emperor, engrossed in military preparations, forgot this transient ebullition of resistance in the legislature, or prudently dissembled his resentment, lest he should extend still further a flame which he could not extinguish. Still, however, he eluded all appearance even of closing with the terms proposed by the Allies; and declined to follow the example set on a similar crisis by Louis XIV., who saved France by the noble and well-known proclamation, in which, after showing that he had made every sacrifice to obtain peace, which was consistent with his honour or the integrity of his dominions, he called on his people as his last resource to rally round the throne.[1]*

[1] Hist. Parl. de France, xxxix. 460, 461. Bign. xiii. 51.

36. Measures of Napoleon for the defence of France.

Vast preparations were made for resisting the enemy. Commissioners were sent down to all the departments to hasten the levies of men, accelerate their equipment and arming, take measures for the arming and provisioning of the fortresses, and where invasion was threatened, effect a levy *en masse*. A decree of 4th January fixed

Jan. 4.

* "J'aurais accepté, pour rétablir la paix, des conditions bien opposées à la sûreté de mes provinces frontières; mais plus j'ai témoigné de facilité et d'envie de dissiper les ombrages que mes ennemis affectent de conserver de ma puissance et de mes desseins, plus ils ont multiplié leurs prétentions. J'ai fait voir à toute l'Europe que je désirais sincèrement les faire jouir de la paix; et je suis persuadé que mes peuples s'opposeraient eux-mêmes à la recevoir à des conditions également contraires à la justice et à l'honneur du nom Français."—*Proclamation de Louis XIV, 12th June* 1709. CAPEFIGUE, *Histoire de Louis XIV.*, vi. 107.

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the budget at 1,176,800,000 francs, or £47,072,000 sterling; and in order to provide for this immense sum, fifty per cent was ordered to be added to the land tax; and the duties on doors and windows, as well as the personal and assessed taxes, were doubled by the sole authority of the Emperor. The commissioners sent down to the provinces on these momentous missions, however, though invested with very ample powers, were men little calculated to move the masses; being mostly old generals or decayed functionaries of the imperial court, who had no feeling in common with the great bulk of the community. But even if they had been endowed with the energy of Danton, or the fire of Mirabeau, the passions were extinct in the nation; the time was past when it was possible again to revive the revolutionary fever. A sombre feeling pervaded all classes that the wars of Napoleon were endless, and that a change of government or dynasty could alone put a stop to the ceaseless effusion of human blood. Soon after, the rapid advance of the Allies rendered all these defensive preparations of little avail; and the occupation of a third of France by their victorious armies reduced the resources and weakened the influence of the Emperor, as much as it augmented the physical means and swelled the moral strength of his antagonists.[1]

[1] Thib. ix. 476, 479. Decrees, Jan. 4, and Jan. 9, 1814. Goldsmith, vi. 584, 587. Cap. x. 330, 334

37. Treaty of Valençay, by which Ferdinand is restored to the Spanish crown.

The presence of external danger at this period extorted from Napoleon two important concessions in foreign diplomacy, which of themselves were calculated to have effected an entire alteration in the relations of the European states to each other, and implied a total abandonment on his part of the principal objects of his Continental policy. The first of these was the treaty of Valençay, by which he agreed to the liberation of Ferdinand VII. from his confinement in France, and his restoration to the throne of Spain. The coincidence of the invasion of the south of the empire by Wellington, with the climax of discontent which the democratic

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leaders at Cadiz had raised against their English allies, from the glorious successes of their arms, and the entire liberation of the Peninsula from the invader's yoke, naturally suggested to the French Emperor the hope that, by relinquishing all thoughts of retaining Joseph on the throne of Spain, and restoring the imprisoned monarch to his dominions, he might not only break the sword of Wellington in his hands, but convert the exasperated Jacobins of Cadiz into useful allies.[1]

[1] Thib. ix. 442, 443. Cap. x. 310, 311.

38. Napoleon abandons Joseph, and restores Ferdinand.

The sacrifice required was equal to nothing; for Joseph was already bereft of his dominions, and had recently arrived at Paris, accompanied only by a few baggage waggons, laden with the riches of the Escurial—the poor remains of a lost crown, dishonoured throne, and plundered realm. By the advice of Talleyrand, Napoleon immediately abandoned his disconsolate brother to his fate, and opened a negotiation with Ferdinand, the object of which was to restore the captive monarch to his dominions, and re-establish peace with Spain on such terms as might be most likely to embroil that power with its English allies. He opened the communication by a holograph letter to Ferdinand, in which, accusing the English of a design to establish democracy and Jacobinism in Spain,* he professed his own desire to re-establish the good understanding which had so long subsisted between the two monarchies. Ferdinand at first was doubtful of the Emperor's sincerity, and was cautious in the answers he gave. But as soon as he was made aware of the real intentions of the Emperor, then the negotiation was not long of being brought to a conclusion. Ferdinand, wearied

* "My Cousin,—The present political circumstances of my empire make me desirous of winding up the affairs of Spain. England there foments anarchy, Jacobinism, and the destruction of the monarchy and the nobility, in order to establish a republic. I cannot be insensible to the destruction of a nation so near my own states, and with which I have so many maritime interests in common. I desire, therefore, to take away every pretext for English intervention, and to re-establish the bonds of friendship and good neighbourhood which have so long existed between the two nations."

of his long detention at Valençay, was overjoyed at the prospect of regaining his liberty and his dominions; and he had little scruple in agreeing to any terms which were exacted of him. He was certain that they would at all events procure for him his liberation; and he flattered himself with the secret hope that, if any of them should prove burdensome, he could avail himself of the plea that the treaty was concluded under the coercion of captivity, and was no longer binding on him or the nation after he had regained his independence.[1]

[1] Cap. x. 310, 311. Thib. ix. 442, 443. Bign. xiii. 89.

It was in the middle of November, immediately after the return of Napoleon from Leipsic, that this negotiation was commenced under the direction of Maret, and by the intervention of M. Laforest, an able diplomatist who had long been ambassador of France at the court of Joseph, and had there acquired an accurate knowledge of the secret springs of influence in the Spanish councils. The Emperor wrote to Ferdinand in a conciliatory and flattering strain; representing that the affairs of his empire had inspired him with the desire to close at once the contest in the Peninsula, to put an end to the anarchy which had so long desolated its provinces, and terminate that fatal ascendency which England, for its own selfish purposes, had converted into the means of diffusing universal ruin over its kingdoms. Ferdinand replied in dignified terms, that he could not conclude an arrangement without the consent of the Spanish nation, or at least of the Regency; and that, rather than treat without its deputies, he would spend all his life at Valençay. The Duke de San Carlos, however, was sent shortly after to Paris, where he had a long secret interview with Napoleon, who soon convinced him of the sincerity of his proposals. The Duke forthwith returned to the captive monarch, who was no sooner assured of the intention of Napoleon really to liberate him from his captivity, than he agreed to everything that was required.[2]

39. Negotiation which led to the treaty.

Nov. 11, 1813.

Nov. 21.

[2] Thib. ix. 442, 443. Cap. x. 310. Napoleon to Ferdinand, Nov. 11, 1813.

The treaty was concluded on the 11th December, and

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40. Its conditions.

stipulated the recognition, by the Emperor, of Ferdinand as King of Spain and the Indies; that the English troops should retire from the Spanish dominions; that Port-Mahon and Ceuta should never be ceded to Great Britain; that the high contracting parties should mutually guarantee each other's dominions, and maintain the rights of their respective flags, agreeably to the stipulations of the treaty of Utrecht; and that the late monarch, Charles IV., should receive an annuity of thirty millions of reals, (£300,000) and two millions of reals (£20,000) yearly to the Queen-dowager, in case of her surviving her husband. The treaty provided for its ratification by the regency established at Madrid. Thus had Napoleon and Talleyrand the address, at the conclusion of a long and bloody war, in which their arms had been utterly and irretrievably overthrown, to procure from the monarch whom they had retained so long in captivity, terms as favourable as they could possibly have expected from a long series of victories. And thus did the sovereign, who had regained his liberty and his crown by the profuse shedding of English blood, make the first use of his promised freedom to banish from his dominions the allies whose swords had liberated him from prison, and placed him on the throne.[1]

[1] Cap. x. 310, 311. Thib. ix. 442, 443. See the treaty in Martens, i. 654. N. R.

41. It is not ratified by the Regency and Cortes.

The result, however, both disappointed the hopes of the French diplomatists, and saved the honour of the Spanish nation. The spirit of the Peninsular revolution, as Wellington often remarked, was essentially anti-Gallican; and though the democrats of Cadiz, in the ardour of their pursuit of absolute power, had evinced the most inveterate hostility against the English general and his gallant army, and even gone so far as to open secret negotiations with Joseph for the recognition of his title to the crown, provided he subscribed the republican constitution of 1812;[2] yet they recoiled from actual submission to France, and could not be brought to give their sanction to a treaty, extorted from their sovereign while in a state

[2] *Ante*, ch. lxxvi. § 42.

of captivity, which was calculated to arrest their arms in the moment of victory, and stain the honour of a contest which already resounded through the world. The Regency and the Cortes, accordingly, had the virtue to refuse the ratification of the treaty ; and although Napoleon, hoping to distract or paralyse the Spanish armies, sent Ferdinand back into Spain, where he arrived by the route of Catalonia on the 19th March, yet the treaty, as it remained without ratification, made no change in the military operations ; and Spain took a part in the war down to the final overthrow of the power of Napoleon.[1]

March 19. [1] Nap. vi. 511. Wellington to General Clinton, Jan. 27, 1814. Gur. xi. 480.

A similar feeling of necessity induced Napoleon shortly after to recede from another favourite object of his ambition, and to consent to the liberation of the Pope from his long and painful confinement at Fontainebleau. The whole of Christendom had long been scandalised at the prolonged imprisonment of the supreme Pontiff, and the French Emperor had felt the consequence of the profound indignation which it had excited, in the inveterate hostility of the Peninsular nations, as well as in the readiness with which Austria had united her forces to those of the Alliance. With the double view, accordingly, of depriving his enemies of this envenomed weapon of hostility, and propitiating Austria—from the diplomacy of which he never ceased to expect secret favour, in consequence of the matrimonial alliance—he made private overtures to the Pope at Fontainebleau early in January. What was not a little extraordinary, the person first charged with the delicate mission was a lady of rank belonging to the court of Marie Louise—the Marquise Anne Brignole of Sienna. She had several interviews with his Holiness in November ; but the Pope was firm in declining to come to any accommodation till he was restored to Rome : and he persisted in the same refusal when the Archbishop of Bourges formally offered, two months afterwards, on the Emperor's part, to restore the Holy See as far as Perugio.[2]

42. Napoleon opens a negotiation with the Pope.

Nov. 15, 1813.

Jan. 18. [2] Artaud, Vie de Pié VII. ii. 362, 369.

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43. Who declines to negotiate, but is liberated by Napoleon.

He replied, that the restitution of his dominions was an act of justice which Providence would itself work out, and which could not be the fit subject of a treaty while the Pope was detained, to the scandal of Christendom, in a state of captivity. He added—"Possibly our faults render us unworthy to behold again the Eternal City; but our successors will recover the dominions which appertain to them. You may assure the Emperor that we feel no hostility towards him—religion does not permit it: and, when we are at Rome, he will see we shall do what is suitable." The necessities of the Emperor, however, rendered it indispensable for him to disembarrass himself of the presence of the Pope, even although he could not extort from him any concessions of territory to prop up his falling empire; and accordingly, four days afterwards, on the 22d January, Pius VII. was conveyed away from Fontainebleau towards the south of France, by Montauban and Castel Naudery. Yet even in this act of concession, the grasping disposition of the Emperor was rendered apparent: he delayed, on various pretexts, the passage of the supreme Pontiff through the south of France, hopeful that a return of fortune to his arms might enable him to retain so precious a prisoner in his power. When Paris was taken by the Allied armies, he was still detained at Tarascon, near the mouth of the Rhone; and the final order for his deliverance proceeded from the provisional government which succeeded upon the fall of Napoleon.[1]

Jan. 22.

[1] Artaud, Vie de Pié VII. ii. 362, 371. Cap. x. 312, 313.

44. Negotiations of Murat with Napoleon and the Allies.

Negotiations of an important character at the same time were going on, between both Napoleon and the Allied powers, with Murat, King of Naples. That brave but irresolute prince, seeing clearly the approaching downfal of the Emperor, and actuated as well by his own inclinations as by the ambition of his queen, Caroline, who, after having tasted of the sweets of royalty, had little inclination to share in the ruin of her brother and benefactor, was desirous above all things, by one means or

other, to secure, and if possible strengthen, in the coming catastrophe, his own throne. With this view, after the overthrow of Leipsic, when the external fortunes of the Emperor were evidently sealed, while he still kept up a confidential correspondence with Napoleon, he advanced a column of troops to Ancona, which he occupied, proclaiming loudly his resolution to establish the independence of Italy. At the same time he secretly opened a negotiation with Prince Metternich, while he was loudly professing his desire to adhere to Napoleon if secured in the general sovereignty of Italy. In truth, it was evident that he would join his arms to whichever party should bid highest for his alliance.[1]

[1] Cap. x. 343, 344. Thib. ix. 494, 496.

45. His double dealing with Napoleon and the Allies, with the last of whom he concludes a treaty.

To Napoleon he held out, that matters had now arrived at that pass when it was necessary to take a decisive part; that the menacing position of the English in Sicily rendered it wholly impossible for him to hazard the bulk of his forces to the north of the Po; but that, if the Emperor would guarantee to him the whole Italian provinces to the south of that river, and unite them all into one monarchy, he would rekindle the flame of independence in Italy, and raise such a spirit in that peninsula, that Austria should never cross the Adige.* To Metternich he at the same time represented, that the ambition of Napoleon was insatiable, as his infatuation was incurable, and that he would willingly enter into the

* "Your Majesty need not indulge the hopes you have formed of seeing me pass the Po; for if I put that river between my army and my own dominions, I should have no means of resisting the fermentation which now prevails in Romagna, Tuscany, and my own states. Be assured, Sire! the proclamation of the independence of Italy, forming one single power of all its states to the south of the Po, would save that country: without such measure it is lost beyond redemption. It will be partitioned anew; and your sublime design of emancipating the Italian peninsula, after having covered it with glory, is for ever lost. Put at this moment the provinces beyond the Po at my disposal, and I will engage that the Austrians shall never cross the Adige. The enemy at present shake the Italians by speaking to them of independence; the hope which they have in their armies has hitherto obviated the effect of these propositions: but will they continue proof against such seductions, if the King of Naples do nothing to realise their hopes, and continue, on the contrary, to maintain the yoke of the stranger? It is mere delusion to sup-

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coalition of the Allied sovereigns, provided he were guaranteed the possession of his Neapolitan dominions. Napoleon having returned no answer to his last and urgent demand for the establishment, in his favour, of a sovereignty embracing the whole territories to the south of the Po, he wrote a long letter to him, in which he announced that matters had now reached a crisis, and that he could no longer refuse to come to terms with the Allies.* He was as good as his word, and early in January concluded a treaty, by which it was stipulated that he should be guaranteed in his Italian dominions, and join the Allied forces on the Po with thirty thousand men.[1]

Jan. 11. [1] See the treaty in Martens, N. R. i. 660. Cap. x. 343, 344. Bign. xiii. 187.

46. He invades the Roman territories.

No sooner was this treaty signed, than Murat prepared to act in conformity to it, and on the 19th January entered Rome at the head of twenty thousand men. The slender French garrison retired into the castle of St Angelo; and thus was the second city in Napoleon's empire wrested from him by the arms, not of his enemies, but of his brother-in-law and lieutenant, the old comrade and friend whom he had raised from a private station to the throne of Naples! Murat accompanied this invasion by an energetic proclamation, in which he outstripped the most inveterate enemies of France in his denunciation of the perfidy and violence of the Revolutionary government. "Soldiers! as long as I could believe that the Emperor Napoleon combated for peace and the

pose they will. Will your Majesty explain yourself on this vital point? Time presses; the enemy is daily reinforced. I am constrained to silence; and the season approaches when I in my turn will be driven to make a choice, and forced to join the enemy. Sire! in the name of all you have dearest in the world—in the name of your glory—delay no longer. Make peace! make it on any terms."—MURAT *to* NAPOLEON, *25th December* 1813. CAPEFIGUE, x. 544, 545, *note*.

* "Sire,—This is the saddest day of my life. I have to make a choice; and I see on the one side the inevitable loss of my dominions, my family, and possibly of my glory; and, on the other, engagements at variance with my eternal attachment to your Majesty, with my unchangeable devotion to France. For four days past an Austrian commissioner, Count Neipperg, has been at Naples, proposing to me, in the name of his sovereign, a treaty of peace."—MURAT *to* NAPOLEON, *Jan.* 10, 1813. BIGNON, xiii. 190.

happiness of France, I fought by his side ; but now it is no longer possible to give credit to that illusion. The Emperor breathes nothing but war. I would betray the interests of my native country, of my present dominions, and of yourselves, if I did not at once separate my arms from his, to join them to those of the powerful Allies, whose magnanimous intentions are to re-establish the independence of nations and the dignity of thrones. Soldiers ! there are but two banners in Europe—on the one are inscribed Religion, Morality, Justice, Law, Peace, and Happiness—on the other, Persecution, Artifice, Violence, Tyranny, War, and Mourning to all nations." A caustic, though, in the main, just expression ; but which sounds strangely, coming from the brother-in-law of Napoleon, and a child of the Revolution ![1]

[1] Thib. ix. 496. Cap. x. 342, 344.

47. Incipient defection of Eugene Beauharnais.

In the general fever of anxiety to preserve the dignities and possessions they had acquired, hardly any member of Napoleon's family escaped unsullied. Even Eugene Beauharnais, though a more exalted and blameless character than Murat, was not uninfected by the contagion : although he wrote publicly that he would not separate himself from his benefactor, yet he in secret received overtures from the Allies, and subsequently sent a plenipotentiary to Chatillon, to attend to his separate interests. What ultimately prevented this negotiation from coming to maturity, was not any disinclination on his part to come to an accommodation, but the impossibility of reconciling his pretensions to his Italian dominions with the ambitious views of Austria over that part of the peninsula. All heads were swept away by the torrent : every former obligation, how great soever, was forgotten. Among the rest, the Princess Eliza, Napoleon's sister, endeavoured to save her fortune in the general wreck : her uneasiness at the prospect of a downfal was extreme, and she lent a ready ear to the suggestion of Fouché when he passed through Florence,[2] on his way back from

[2] Cap. x. 344. Fouché, Mém. ii. 254, 255.

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the honourable exile which the Emperor had assigned him at Rome and Naples—"Once Napoleon is dead, everything will fall into its natural place, and they will leave you your beautiful palazzo Pitti."

43. Treaty between Denmark and the Allied Powers.

In the north of Europe a more honourable constancy in misfortune was exhibited; but the march of events was irresistible, and even the warmest allies of the French were at last compelled to abandon their fortunes, and range themselves on the side of the European confederacy. The Danes, whom jealousy of Russia, not less than the bitter recollection of their capital twice taken by the English, had inspired with a strong predilection for the French alliance, and who had exhibited, like the King of Saxony, an honourable fidelity to their engagements during the general defection of 1813, were unable any longer to continue the contest. Entirely severed from the armies of Napoleon by the evacuation of Germany after the battle of Leipsic: unable either to succour or derive assistance from the corps of Davoust, shut up in Hamburg; pressed by the army of the Crown-prince of Sweden on the south, and the fleets of England on the north—the Danish monarchy was menaced with immediate destruction, and the cabinet of Copenhagen had no alternative but to submit, even on the hard terms of agreeing to abandon Norway. After a short negotiation, accordingly, a treaty was concluded between Denmark and the Allied powers, by which it was stipulated that the former should join the coalition against France, and bring to its support a corps, the strength of which was to be afterwards determined, to operate in the north of Germany. The King of Denmark agreed to the cession of Norway to Sweden; the King of Sweden, on his part, engaging to maintain the rights and privileges of its inhabitants inviolate; and, in exchange for this painful sacrifice, the duchy of Pomerania, with the island of Rugen, were ceded by Sweden to the Danish crown. Thus was accomplished the first permanent cession of a

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kingdom in the north of Europe, consequent upon the wars of the French Revolution. And although history cannot contemplate without regret the violent transference of a brave and ancient people from the government of their fathers to a stranger rule, yet the mournful impression is much alleviated by the reflection, that Denmark obtained, to a certain extent at least, an equivalent adjacent to its own territories; that the Scandinavian peninsula was thus for the first time united under one dominion, and a power all but insular established in the Baltic, which, with the support of the British navy, may possibly be able to maintain its independence in future times, even against the colossal power which overshadows the north of Europe.[1]

[1] See the Treaty in Martens, Sup. i. 66; and in Schoell, iv. 227.

49. Important military confederacy of Germany.

While the grand confederacy was thus strengthening itself by fresh alliances on the shores of the Baltic and the Mediterranean, and the last allies of the French domination were breaking off from its sinking empire, the great central power of Germany was rising with portentous energy at the call of patriotism; and the military strength of its inhabitants, roused to the highest pitch by the trumpet of victory, was directed with consummate talent to the prosecution of the last and greatest object of the war—the final subjugation of the power of Napoleon, and the extrication of Europe from the thraldom of the Revolution. The accession of Bavaria to the coalition on the eve of the battle of Leipsic, had already been followed by that of all the lesser powers which formed part of the Rhenish Confederation; and the great outwork which had been erected with so much effort by Napoleon, to form the advanced post of France against Europe, had already become the outwork of Europe against France. The whole population welcomed the Allied troops as deliverers; transport beat in every bosom, joy beamed from every eye; and before even the energy of the Allied cabinets could arrange the different governments in their confederacy, the people had every-

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where made common cause with their armies. A few of the princes, particularly the Grand-duke Charles of Dalberg, Prince Isenberg, and the Prince of La Layen, held out for the French, and their dominions were in consequence occupied by the Allied troops; but all the others gladly ranged themselves under the banners of the victorious powers. Already on the 21st October, before the sovereigns separated from Leipsic, a convention had been entered into, for the organisation of the whole forces of Germany against the common enemy, and the best development of these resources for the purposes of the war. A central administration had been formed, to direct the efforts and regulate the contributions of the states. At the head of it was placed Baron Stein, whose energy and wisdom had so early prepared in Prussia the means of resistance to the French domination.[1]

Oct. 21, 1813.

[1] Schoell, x. 334, 337. Hard. xii. 257, 261.

50. Accession of the Princes of the Confederation of the Rhine to the new league. Oct. 22. Nov. 1 and 2, 1813.

The formal accession of the leading princes of the Confederation of the Rhine was soon obtained to the new league. On the very day after the convention was signed at Leipsic, the King of Würtemberg concluded a treaty with the Allies, and his contingent was fixed at twelve thousand men; the Duke of Saxe-Weimar signed his accession on the 1st, the Duke of Darmstadt on the 2d of November; and the whole lesser princes, with the exceptions above mentioned, followed their example. The Elector of Hesse stood in a somewhat different situation, as he was not a member of the Rhenish Confederacy, his states having been swallowed up in the rickety kingdom of Westphalia. He was accordingly admitted into the grand alliance by a separate treaty in the beginning of December, which immediately restored him to the possession of all his ancient dominions, with the exception of the bailiwicks of Dorheim, which had been assigned to the Grand-duke of Darmstadt. The contingent of the Elector of Hesse was fixed at twelve thousand men. The respectable but unfortunate King of Saxony had been treated with unwonted severity by the

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Allied sovereigns after the battle of Leipsic: none of them, excepting the Crown-prince of Sweden, had visited him in his misfortunes; and he had been conveyed away, a prisoner, to Berlin, where he remained uncertain of the fate which awaited him. But the whole civil and military resources of Saxony were at the disposal of the grand alliance; and its soldiers, borne away by the torrent, marched as cheerfully in the ranks of the Fatherland, as those of the states which had gained most by the crusade for its deliverance.[1]

[1] Schoell, x. 533, 543. Martens, xii. 643 and 649.

51. Treaties at Frankfort in November for regulating the German Confederacy against France.

It was both a delicate and complicated work to arrange into one organised body the various members of the Rhenish Confederacy, and, after adjusting the pretensions, determining on the reclamations, and smoothing down the jealousies of its numerous princes, to combine the whole into one effective league for the prosecution of the war. The general enthusiasm, however, which prevailed, rendered these difficulties much less formidable than they would have been at any other time; and the previous organisation of Napoleon presented a machine ready made, and of most skilful construction, which was now applied with fatal effect against himself. By two treaties concluded at Frankfort on the 18th and 24th November, the important objects of providing for the maintenance of the grand army, and regulating the contingents to be furnished by all the German princes who had joined the confederacy, were accomplished. To effect the first object, each of the princes of the old Confederacy of the Rhine engaged to provide at once, on his own credit, a sum equal to the gross revenue of his dominions; and the payments were to be made in instalments every three months, till the whole was paid up. The sum-total thus raised at once on credit, was 17,116,500 florins, equal to about £1,770,000 sterling.[2]

Nov. 18 and 24, 1813.

[2] Martens, xii. 619, 626. Schoell, x. 353, 358.

In addition to those ample payments in money, the most effective measures were taken to draw forth the military power of the whole states forming the Germanic

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52. Military forces to be furnished by the different powers of Germany.

Confederacy. The contingent of each state was taken at the double of that which it had furnished to the Confederation of the Rhine; the one half to be provided in troops of the line, the other half in landwehr; and in addition to this, corps of volunteers were permitted, and the landsturm or levy *en masse* was organised and made ready for action, in all the countries which seemed to require such extraordinary precautions. The troops thus raised, amounted, independent of the forces of Bavaria, which were thirty-five thousand strong, to upwards of a hundred thousand, besides an equal number of landwehr; and they were divided into six corps. Of these, Saxony furnished twenty thousand, Hanover and Hesse twelve thousand, Würtemberg twelve thousand, and Baden eight thousand.* The most minute regulations were laid down for providing the requisite supplies, hospitals, and provisions, for this vast aggregation of men. So universal and wide-spread was the organisation which had now arisen for arraying Europe in a defensive league against France, and so unanimous the concord which the oppressions of the Revolution had established among nations so various, interests so opposite, and animosities so inveterate.[1]

[1] Schoell, x. 353, 358. Martens, xii. 619 and 626; and Schoell, Recueil, ii. 58.

53. Negotiations with Switzerland.

Nothing remained now but to detach Switzerland from the French alliance, and from the great salient bastion of the Alps to threaten France on the side where its defences were weakest, and the least precautions had been taken by preceding sovereigns to guard against foreign invasion. The Helvetic Confederacy, like all feeble states, without being either strongly attached to or exasperated against France, were desirous to preserve their neutrality, and anxiously sought to prevent their country from becoming the theatre of war. Aware of the great importance of securing the frontier of the Jura from invasion, if not by the attachment, at least by the interests of his mountain

* See Appendix, B, Chap. LXXXIV., for a detailed account of the forces furnished by each of the states of the new German Confederacy.—SCHOELL, *Histoire des Traités de Paix*, x. 357.

neighbours, Napoleon had studiously avoided both insult and injury to them, and forborne to draw those resources from their territory which the proximity of its situation, and warlike character of its inhabitants, placed within his reach. They had neither been plundered and insulted like the Prussians, nor denationalised like the Tyrolese: the conscription of men had been far from oppressive, and the cantons had felt the war rather in the obstruction it occasioned to foreign commerce, than in any peculiar exactions with which it had been attended. An extraordinary diet, assembled at Zurich, had already, in the middle of November, proclaimed the neutrality of the republic, and sent a body of men to the frontiers to cause them to be respected. The French Emperor readily acceded to a declaration which promised to secure France from invasion on the side where it was most vulnerable, and immediately withdrew his troops from the canton of the Tessino, which they had occupied. But the Allied sovereigns were not disposed to be equally forbearing, for it was as much their interest to make their attack from the side of the Alps as it was that of their adversary to avoid it; and accordingly, having resolved to occupy part of the Swiss territory with their troops, they despatched M. Libzettern and Count Capo d'Istria to the Helvetic diet, to endeavour to obtain their consent to such a proceeding.[1]

Nov. 18, 1813.

[1] Schoell, x. 359, 361. Jom. iv. 521.

54. The Allies notify to the Diet their intention to enter the Swiss territory. Dec. 8.

Austria had already taken the initiative in this important negotiation. On the 8th December, M. de Schrant, the envoy of the cabinet of Vienna at the Helvetic Confederacy, presented a note to the diet, in which he declared that the Allied sovereigns were resolved to extricate them from their degrading state of dependence, which had now reached such a height, that their orators were obliged to pronounce an annual eulogium on their oppressors. On the 20th December, M. Libzettern and de Schrant, the Austrian envoy, presented to the diet a note, in which they declared that the intention of the Allied sovereigns

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was to deliver Switzerland from that state of dependence which, under the specious name of protection, had so long kept them in a state of thraldom; that in carrying these intentions into execution, they must of necessity enter the Helvetic territories; that they could not recognise a neutrality which existed only in name; but that they would interfere in no respect in their internal government, and that, from the moment that their independence was really established, they would rigidly observe their neutrality. To this note was annexed the order of the day, which, on the following day, Prince Schwartzenberg was to issue on entering the Swiss territory.* This decisive step at once destroyed the influence which, under the name of mediation, the French Emperor had so long exercised in the states of the Helvetic Confederacy; and as it was followed next day by the entrance of the Allied forces in great strength into their territories, it produced an immediate effect in the Swiss councils.[1]

[1] Schoell, Hist. des Trait. x. 362, 364. Recueil, iv. 31, 42. Dec. 21, 1813.

55. The cantons annul the constitution of Napoleon.

Eight days afterwards, a majority of the deputies of the old cantons, viz., those of Uri, Schwytz, Lucerne, Zurich, Glarus, Zug, Fribourg, Bâle, Schaffhausen, and Appenzel, declared the constitution introduced by Napoleon, by his Act of Mediation, annulled; and promulgated the important principle, that no one canton should be subjected to the government of another—a declaration which, by virtually raising the hitherto dependent cantons of St

* "The irresistible march of events in a war which all just and right-seeing men must look on in the same light, and the necessity of consolidating and securing the happy results which have hitherto flowed from it, have led the Allied armies to the frontiers of Switzerland, and forced them, in furtherance of their operations, to traverse a part of its territory. The necessity of this step, and the vast results dependent on it, will probably furnish a sufficient vindication of it to all reasonable men; but that necessity, great as it is, would not have appeared a sufficient justification in the eyes of the Allied powers, if Switzerland had been in a situation to maintain a true and real neutrality; but so little is this the case, that all the principles of the law of nations authorise them to regard as null the neutrality she has proclaimed. The Allied sovereigns recognise, as the most sacred principle of that law, the right of every state, how inconsiderable soever, to assert and maintain its independence: they are so far from contesting that principle, that it is the

Gall, Thurgovia, Argovia, and the Pays de Vaud, to the rank of independent members of the confederacy, laid the foundation of a more extended and equal confederacy in future times. On the 31st December, the Allied sovereigns issued a declaration, in which they called on the Swiss to take up arms to aid in the recovery of their independence; and at the same time came under a solemn engagement not to lay them down till the independence of the Swiss Confederacy was secured, and placed under the guarantee of the great powers, and till the portions of it, especially the Valais, which had been seized by the French Emperor, were restored to their rightful owners. In these changes, although the aristocratic cantons, especially that of Berne, went cordially along with the Allied powers, yet the Swiss, as a whole, were rather passive submitters to, than active auxiliaries of, their arms. But so equitable was the constitution which they ultimately established, and so complete the independence they have since enjoyed under it, that the Helvetic states have no cause to regret the transient evils which the passage of the Allied forces through their territory occasioned.[1]

Dec. 31.

[1] Schoell, Hist. des Trait. x. 362, 364; and Recueil, iv. 31, 42; ii. 1, 5, 20.

56. Completion of the Grand Alliance against France.

Thus was at length accomplished that great confederacy which the prophetic mind of Pitt long ago foresaw could alone extricate Europe from the fetters of the French revolutionary power, but which the selfish ambition and blind jealousies of the European states had hitherto pre-

basis of all their proceedings: but no state can pretend to neutrality which is not in a condition to assert, and has not in fact asserted, its independence. The pretended neutrality of a state which is habitually governed by external influence, is but a name; and while it secures to one belligerent the advantages of a substantial alliance, it exposes the other to the evils of a real hostility. When, therefore, in a war, the object of which is to impose limits to a menacing and preponderating power, such a neutrality serves as a shield to injustice, and a barrier to those who strive for a better order of things, it must disappear with the evils which have created it. No one can dispute that such is the actual position of Switzerland towards the Allied powers on the one hand, and France, whose south-eastern frontier it covers, on the other." — *Declaration of the Allied Powers to the Swiss Diet*, 21*st Dec.* 1813. SCHOELL, *Recueil*, ii. 8, 12.

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vented them from forming. From the rock of Gibraltar to the shores of Archangel—from the banks of the Scheldt to the margin of the Bosphorus — all Europe was now arrayed in one vast league against France, which was reduced entirely to its own resources. From the kingdom of Italy it could not expect succour, but might rather anticipate demands for assistance : all its other Allies were now arrayed against it; and the power which, only eighteen months before, had headed a crusade of all the western states of the Continent against the independence of Russia, was now reduced to combat, with its own unaided forces, the combined military strength of all Europe. An astonishing change to have been produced in so short a time, and strikingly characteristic of the oppression of that military tyranny which could thus, in so brief a space, reconcile interests so discordant, still jealousies so inveterate, and combine forces so far severed by language, race, and political institutions !

57. Immense forces accumulated by the Allied powers.

The efforts of the Allied cabinets, and the enthusiastic spirit which universally prevailed among their people, had now accumulated forces so prodigious for the invasion of France, that nothing in ancient or modern times had ever approached to their magnitude. By the universal arming of the people, and establishment of the landwehr in all the German states, an enormous array had been collected, which enabled the Allies, without materially weakening their military force on the Rhine, to blockade all the fortresses on that river and the Elbe which were still in the hands of the French, and thus irrevocably sever from the French empire the numerous garrisons, still mustering above a hundred thousand combatants, which were shut up within their walls. The absurdity of Napoleon clinging with such tenacity to these advanced posts of conquest, isolated in the midst of insurgent nations, when he was contending for his very existence in his own dominions, became now strikingly apparent. They at once detached from his standards a vast army, which, if collected together,

might have enabled him still to make head against his enemies, but which, in the foreign fortresses, served as so many beacons scattered through the enemy's territory, at once recalling the recollection of past oppression, and indicating the undiminished resolution to resume it. This extraordinary resolution on the part of the French Emperor to abandon, even in his last extremity, none of the strongholds which he held in any part of Europe, and which cost him, from first to last, above a hundred thousand of his best troops, whom it compelled to surrender to bodies of ill-disciplined landwehr and militia, little superior to themselves in number, was, beyond all doubt, one of the greatest causes of his fall; and it affords a memorable example of the manner in which revolutionary ambition overleaps itself, and falls down on the other side.

58. Grand army under Prince Schwartzenberg.

The forces which the Allied powers had collected by the end of December to co-operate in the projected invasion of France and Italy, were thus disposed. The Grand Army, still under the immediate direction, as in the former campaign, of Prince Schwartzenberg, numbered two hundred and sixty thousand conbatants; and, even after deducting the usual average number of sick and non-effective, might be expected to bring two hundred thousand sabres and bayonets into the field. Its composition, however, was heterogeneous; and though it boasted the imperial guards of Russia, Prussia, and Austria within its ranks, and had the *élite* of the forces of those great military monarchies around its standards, yet it was far from being powerful and efficient, as a whole, in proportion to its gigantic numerical amount. It comprised the Austrian corps of Bubna, Lichtenstein, and Giulay; the Würtembergers under their Prince-Royal; the Bavarians under Marshal Wrede; the Austrian guards and reserves, commanded by Prince Hesse-Homburg; and the German Confederates under Prince Philippe of Hesse-Homburg and Count Hoch-

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berg. But though these German troops were little short of two hundred thousand combatants, and some of them formed a noble array, yet the main strength of the army consisted in the Russian and Prussian guards, and the Russian reserves under the Grand-duke Constantine and Count Milaradowich. These magnificent troops, nearly forty thousand strong, the very flower and pride of the Allied host, with the Russian corps of Wittgenstein, twenty thousand more, all bronzed veterans who had gone through the war of 1812, formed a reserve, in itself a powerful army, which in the end operated with decisive effect upon the fate of the campaign. This immense body was destined to act on the side of Switzerland and Franche-Comté, where there were no fortresses excepting Besançon, Huningen, and Sarre-Louis, to arrest the progress of an invading army. But though the line of its invasion was thus comparatively smooth, and it was so formidable from its numerical strength and the quality of a part of its force, this huge array was seriously paralysed by the presence of the Allied sovereigns at its headquarters, by the consequent subordination of military movements to diplomatic negotiation, by the known aversion of the Austrian cabinet to push matters with Napoleon to extremities, and by the cautious and circumspect character of its commander-in-chief.[1]

[1] Schoell, x. 378, 379. Plotho, iii. Beil, i.

59. Strength and composition of the army of Silesia.

The second army, still called the Army of Silesia, under the orders of Blucher, was composed of four veteran corps, of which two were Prussian under the command of York and Kleist, and two Russian under the direction of Langeron and Sacken. To these had recently been added two corps of German Confederates, one commanded by the Electoral Prince of Hesse-Cassel, and the other by the Duke of Saxe-Coburg. The total amount of this army was one hundred and thirty-seven thousand, of which upwards of fifty thousand were Russians inured to war and flushed with victory, and nearly

forty thousand were Prussian conscripts burning with the ardour of the war of deliverance. This army was stationed on the north-eastern frontier of France, between Mayence and Coblentz, and threatened it on the side of the Vosges mountains and Champagne. In that quarter, though a double line of formidable fortresses guarded the frontier, yet, if they were blockaded, no natural barrier of any strength was interposed, after the Rhine was passed, between that river and Paris; and a vigorous invasion might with certainty be anticipated from the admirable quality of the troops of which the army was composed, and the well-known enterprising character of its chief.[1]

[1] Plotho, iii. Beil, ii. Schoell, x. 380, 381.

60. Army of the Crown Prince of Sweden.

The third army which was destined to co-operate in the invasion of France, was under the command of the Prince-Royal of Sweden. It comprised the Russian corps of Winzingerode, and the Prussian of Bulow, each of which was thirty thousand strong; the corps of German confederates under the Duke of Saxe-Weimar, and that commanded by the Duke of Brunswick, each also numbering thirty thousand combatants; fifteen thousand of Walmoden's men; the Swedish auxiliaries, twenty thousand; and nine thousand English, who took a part in the campaign on the banks of the Scheldt. This army mustered in all one hundred and seventy-four thousand combatants, of whom a hundred and twenty thousand, after deducting the sick and troops blockading the garrisons, might be relied on for operations in the field. But although this army was thus formidable in point of numerical amount, and the Russian and Prussian corps which it comprised were second to none in experience and valour, yet the positions of the troops, the variety of nations of which they were composed, and the peculiar political situation of their commander-in-chief, rendered it doubtful whether they would render any very efficient services in the course of the campaign. They lay on the Lower Rhine, between Cologne and Düsseldorf; with the iron barrier of the Netherlands, still in

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the enemy's hands, right in their front. And though a large proportion of the fortresses of which it was composed were unarmed or ill-provisioned, yet others, particularly Antwerp, might be expected to make a formidable defence, and would require to be besieged by considerable forces. The abilities of Bernadotte were unquestionable, and he had, on more than one occasion, rendered important services in the course of the preceding campaign; yet his disinclination, in itself natural and unavoidable, to push matters to extremity against his old country and comrades, was very apparent; and the hopes which he in secret cherished, of being called, on the fall of the present dynasty, to the throne of France, rendered him in the last degree unwilling to be associated in the minds of its people with the days of their national humiliation or disaster.[1]

[1] Plotho, iii. Beil, iii. Schoell, x. 381, 382.

61. The Allied reserves.

Independent of these immense armies, the Allied powers had collected, or were collecting, a variety of reserves, which in themselves constituted a mighty host. They consisted of the Austrian reserve, twenty thousand strong, under the Archduke Ferdinand of Würtemberg; the Russians who were before Hamburg, to the number of fifty thousand, under Benningsen; the Russian reserve, commanded by Labanoff, of fifty thousand, who were mustering in Poland; the Prussian landwehr, engaged in the blockade of the fortresses on the Elbe and the Oder, to the number of fifty thousand more; the Prussian reserve, twenty thousand strong, who were assembling in Westphalia, under Prince Louis of Hesse-Homburg; and the Russian and Prussian force blockading Glogau, in number about fifteen thousand—in all two hundred and thirty-five thousand; which, with the three grand armies of Schwartzenberg, Blucher, and the Crown Prince of Sweden, already assembled on the frontier of the Rhine; eighty thousand Austrians, who, under Marshal Bellegarde, were destined to act in the north of Italy; and a hundred and forty thousand British, Portuguese,

and Spaniards, who, under the guidance of Wellington, were assailing the south of France, in Béarn, and on the frontier of Catalonia,—formed a mass of A MILLION AND TWENTY-EIGHT THOUSAND MEN, who were prepared to act against the empire of Napoleon.[1]* A stupendous force! such as had never before been directed against any power in the annals of human warfare; formidable alike from its discipline, its experience, and the immense train of military munitions with which it was furnished; animated by the highest spirit, united by the strongest bonds; stimulated alike by past suffering and present victory; and guided by sovereigns and generals, who, trained in the school of misfortune, were at length cordially united in the resolution, at all hazards, to terminate the fatal military preponderance of the French empire.[2]

[1] Schoell, x. 381, 382. Plotho, iii. Beil, iv.

[2] Plotho, iii. App. Schoell, x. 381, 382.

62. Napoleon's forces to oppose the invasion.

To oppose this crusade, Napoleon had a most inadequate force at his disposal. Not that he had not used the utmost exertions, and made use of the most rigorous means, to recruit his armies; or that his conscriptions on paper did not exhibit a most formidable array of combatants. But the physical strength and moral constancy of his empire were alike exhausted, and his vast levies now brought but a trifling accession of men to his standards. Since the 1st of September 1812, that is, during a period of sixteen months, he had obtained from the senate successive conscriptions to the amount of twelve hundred and sixty thousand men, in addition to at least eight hundred thousand who were enrolled beneath his

* Viz. Grand Army under Schwartzenberg, . . 261,650
Army of Silesia under Blucher, . . . 137,391
Army of the North under Bernadotte, . . 174,000
Russian, Prussian, and Austrian Reserves, . . 235,000
Austrians in Italy under Bellegarde, . . 80,000
British and Portuguese in France, . . . 78,000
Anglo-Sicilian and Spanish armies in Catalonia, . 62,000

Total acting against France, . . . 1,028,041

—SCHOELL, *Traités de Paix*, x. 382, 383. For a detailed account of this immense force, see Appendix, C, Chap. LXXXIV. It might be expected to bring 700,000 effective men into the field.

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banners at the commencement of that period. Of this immense force, however, embracing on paper above *two millions* of combatants, hardly two hundred and fifty thousand could now be assembled for the defence of the empire; and of these not more than two hundred thousand could by any possibility be brought forward in the field. Nearly five hundred thousand had perished or been made prisoners in the Russian campaign; three hundred thousand in the war in Saxony; two hundred and fifty thousand had disappeared in the two last Peninsular campaigns; nearly a hundred thousand were shut up in the fortresses on the Elbe or the Oder; a still greater number had sunk under the horrors of the military hospitals in the interior; and the great levy of five hundred and eighty thousand in October and November 1813, had—from the failure of the class to which it applied, in consequence of the conscription having now reached the *sons* of the generation, the mass of which had been cut off by the dreadful campaigns of 1793 and 1794—proved so unproductive, that the Emperor could not, with the utmost exertions, reckon upon the support of more than three hundred and fifty thousand men in the field, to defend the frontiers of his wide-spread dominions, and make head on the Rhine, on the Jura, and on the Garonne, against such a multitude of enemies.[1]

[1] Fain, Camp. de 1814, 28, 31. Schoell, x.

63. Distribution of Napoleon's forces.

Such as they were, these forces were thus distributed. Sixty thousand men were blockaded in Hamburg, Magdeburg, and Torgau; and forty thousand in the fortresses on the Oder, the Vistula, in Holland, and Italy; fifty thousand, under Eugene, in Italy, maintained a painful defensive against the Austrians under Marshal Hiller; while a hundred thousand under Soult and Suchet, in Béarn and Catalonia, struggled against the armies of Wellington and Bentinck. The real body of men, however, which the Emperor had at his disposal to

resist the invasion of the Allies on the Rhine, did not exceed a hundred and ten thousand combatants, and this force was scattered over an immense line, above five hundred miles in length, from the Alps to the frontiers of Holland; so that at no period of the campaign could he collect above sixty thousand combatants at a single point. Agreeably to his usual system, of never acknowledging the paucity of his resources, and possibly in the hope of deceiving his enemies, this comparatively diminutive host was divided into eight corps. But they were the mere skeleton of the Grand Army, and many of the regiments could not muster two hundred bayonets.[1]

[1] Vaud. i. 116, 117. Koch, i. 47, 48. Plotho, iii. v. App.

64. Their positions on the Rhine and Rhone.

Victor, with nine thousand infantry, and three thousand five hundred horse, guarded the line of the Rhine from Bâle to Strasburg; Marmont, with ten thousand foot and twelve hundred cavalry, was stationed along the same river from Strasburg to Mayence. That important fortress itself, with the observation of the Rhine from thence to Coblentz, was intrusted to Count Morand, with eighteen thousand combatants. From thence to Nimeguen the frontier was guarded by Macdonald, with eighteen thousand infantry and three thousand cavalry; while Mortier, with the imperial guard and reserve cavalry, still mustering eleven thousand infantry and seven thousand horse, lay on the Yonne. Ney, with his five divisions, hardly amounting to ten thousand foot-soldiers, occupied the defiles of the Vosges mountains; and Augereau, with twelve thousand, was stationed at Lyons. Thus, not more than seventy-five thousand infantry, and fifteen thousand horse, could be relied on to withstand the shock of above three hundred and fifty thousand Allies, who could immediately be brought into action; and even after taking into view the reserves being formed in the interior, and the depots at Metz, Verdun, Paris, Troyes, and other places, to which every disposable sabre and bayonet was directed,[2]—not more than a hundred and

[2] Vaud. i. 116, 117. Koch, Camp. de 1814, i. 47, 49, 131, 132. Cap. x. 331. Plotho, iii. Beil, v.

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twenty thousand men could be mustered to withstand the threatened invasion, and of these little more than one-half could possibly be assembled in a single field of battle.*

65. Hesitation of the Allied generals at the idea of invading France.

Notwithstanding their great superiority of force, the Allied sovereigns hesitated before they undertook the serious step of crossing the Rhine; and opinions were much divided as to the proper place where the passage should be attempted when the enterprise was resolved on. The physical weakness of the French empire, the exhausting effects of the long-continued drain upon its military population, the despair which had seized upon the minds of a large portion of its people, from the entire failure of the vast efforts they had made to maintain their external dominions, were in a great measure unknown to the Allied generals. They still regarded its frontiers with secret awe, as they had been accustomed to do, when Napoleon led forth his conquering bands to humble or subjugate every adjoining state. The catastrophes of two campaigns, how great soever, could not at once obliterate the recollection of twenty years of triumphs; and France, in its weakness, was now protected by the recollection of its departed greatness, as the Grand Army,

* The aggregate of these forces was as follows :—

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Blockaded in the fortresses on the Elbe, | | 60,000 |
| ... ... ... in Holland, Italy, and on the Oder, | | 40,000 |
| In Italy under Eugene, | | 50,000 |
| In Béarn, under Soult, | | 70,000 |
| In Catalonia under Suchet, | | 30,000 |
| At Lyons, under Augereau, | | 12,000 |
| Grand Army under Napoleon, viz. : | | |
| Victor, | 12,500 | |
| Marmont, | 10,200 | |
| Morand, | 18,000 | |
| Macdonald, | 21,000 | |
| Mortier, | 18,000 | |
| Ney, | 10,000 | |
| | | 89,700 |
| Reserves in the Interior, | | 30,000 |
| | | 381,700 |

—See KOCH, Tables 3 and 4; and VAUDONCOURT's *Campagne de* 1814, i. 116, 117. See also Appendix, D, Chap. LXXXIV.

at the close of the Moscow retreat, had been saved from destruction by the halo which played round the names of its marshals; or as the Lower Empire had so long been sheltered by the venerable letters on its standards, which, amidst the servility of Asiatic despotism, recalled the glorious recollections of the senate and people of Rome. Such was the influence of these feelings, that it required all the enthusiasm excited by the triumph of Leipsic, and all the personal influence and vigour in council of Alexander, to overcome the scruples of the Allied cabinets, and lead to the adoption of a plan for the campaign based upon an immediate invasion of France with the whole forces of the coalition.[1]

[1] Danilefsky, Camp. of 1814, 10, 14. Lond. 215, 216.

66. Plan of invasion proposed by Alexander, and agreed to by the Allied sovereigns.

It was at first proposed that Schwartzenberg's army should cross the Rhine, enter Switzerland near Bâle, and spread into Italy, to co-operate with the Austrian army in Lombardy under Bellegarde; while Blucher was to invade near Mayence, and the army of the north, under Bernadotte, threatened the northern frontier on the side of Flanders. But, though this plan was warmly approved by the cabinet of Vienna, which was more intent on effecting or securing the important acquisitions which seemed to lie open to its grasp in Italy, than on pushing matters to extremities against Napoleon and the grandson of the Emperor Francis; yet it by no means coincided with the views of Alexander, who was thoroughly convinced of the necessity of striking home at the centre of the enemy's power, and had in secret become assured, that no lasting accommodation could be looked for so long as Napoleon remained on the throne of France. He not only, therefore, strongly urged at Frankfort the immediate resumption of offensive measures on the most extended scale, before France had recovered from its consternation, or Napoleon had gained time to recruit his shattered forces; but proposed the plan of invasion, of all others the best calculated to concentrate the whole forces of the Alliance against the centre of the

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enemy's power, and bring the war to an immediate and decisive issue. This plan consisted in moving the Grand Army, under Schwartzenberg, into Switzerland, and causing it to enter France by the side of Bâle and the Jura, while Blucher advanced direct from the neighbourhood of Mayence on Paris, and the Prince-Royal of Sweden penetrated through the fortresses of Flanders into Picardy and Artois. In this way, not only would France be assailed by the most powerful of the Allied armies on the Swiss frontier, where very few fortresses existed to check its advance, but each of the vast invading hosts would act on its own line of operations, had a ready retreat in case of disaster, and yet would be constantly converging towards a common centre, where the last and decisive blow was to be struck. It was a repetition, on a still greater scale, of the plans laid down for the preceding campaign in the conferences of Trachenberg; Switzerland being now the salient bastion which Bohemia had formerly been; and Blucher and Schwartzenberg having nearly the correspondent posts assigned to them in Champagne and Flanders, which they had on the banks of the Elbe and the sands of Prussia.[1]*

[1] Dan. 14, 17. Alexander to Bernadotte, Oct. 29, 1813. Ibid.

The advantages of this plan were so obvious, that it at once commanded the assent of the Allied generals; and,

* "Here," said Alexander, "is the plan proposed by me, and entirely approved by the Austrian and Prussian commanders-in-chief: — Offensive operations on the part of the Grand Army between Mayence and Strasburg offer many difficulties, as we cannot leave the fortresses behind us without observation. By entering France on the side of Switzerland, we meet with incomparably fewer difficulties, that frontier not being so strongly fortified. Another advantage attending this movement is the possibility of turning the Viceroy's left wing, and thereby forcing him to a precipitate retreat. In that case, the Austrian army of Italy may advance on Lyons, so as to form a prolongation of our line, and, by means of its left wing, connect our operations with those of the Duke of Wellington, whose headquarters are now at Oleron. In the mean time, Blucher, with one hundred thousand men, may form an army of observation on the Rhine; and, without confining himself to observation, may cross that river near Mannheim, and manœuvre against the enemy till the Grand Army reach the field of action. All the four armies—viz. the Grand Army, that of Italy, Blucher, and Wellington, will stand on one line in the most fertile part of France, forming the segment of a circle. The four armies will

in the middle of December, the troops over the whole line were put in motion in order to carry it into effect. The grand army of Schwartzenberg lay close to Switzerland; that of Silesia extended along the line of the Rhine, from Mannheim to Coblentz. The former was intended to enter France by the road through the Jura from Bâle, by Vesoul, to Langres—a city of the highest importance in a strategetical point of view, as being the place where several roads from the south-east and eastern frontier intersect each other. But the prodigious multitude of this army, which, after every deduction, was above two hundred thousand strong, could not advance by a single road, and it required to effect its ingress by all the routes leading across the Jura from Switzerland into France. It was divided, accordingly, into nine columns, which were directed to move by different roads towards Paris and the interior.[1]

67. Line of invasion for Schwartzenberg's army.

Atlas, Plate 94.

[1] Vaud. i. 122. Dan. 21, 22.

The first, under Count Bubna, after entering Switzerland by Bâle, was to advance by Berne and Neufchâtel to Geneva, and thence descend the course of the Rhone to threaten Augereau, who occupied Lyons with twelve thousand men. The second, commanded by Count Giulay, was to move direct on the great road, through Montbeliard and Vesoul, to Langres. The third, under Lichtenstein, was intrusted with the

68. Lines by which its columns were to advance into France.

push forward, and, diminishing the arc, will thus draw near its centre—that is Paris, or the headquarters of Napoleon. Meanwhile your Royal Highness may advance on Cologne and Düsseldorf, and thence in the direction of Antwerp, by which you will separate Holland from France, and oblige Napoleon either to abandon that important fortress, or, if he endeavour to retain it, materially to diminish, by the numerous garrison which it will require, the effective strength of his armies. The grand object is not to lose a moment, that we may not allow Napoleon time to form and discipline an army, and furnish it with supplies, our business being to take advantage of the disorganised state of his forces. I entreat your Royal Highness not to lose a moment in putting your army in motion, in furtherance of the general plan of operations."—ALEXANDER *to* BERNADOTTE, 29*th October* 1813; DANILEFSKY, *Camp. de* 1814, 17, 18. A grand design! very nearly what was ultimately carried into effect, and a memorable proof of the foresight and ability of the Russian Emperor, especially when it is recollected this letter was written only ten days after the battle of Leipsic.

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blockade of Besançon, the only fortress of importance which required to be observed on the Jura and Swiss frontier. The fourth, under Colloredo, was to march on Langres by Giulay's left; at the same time that it detached two divisions, or half its force, to blockade Auxonne, and advance by Dijon to Auxerre. The fifth, led by Hesse-Homburg, consisting of the Austrian reserves, followed on the same road through Dijon to Châtillon; while the sixth and seventh, under the Prince of Würtemberg and Marshal Wrede, who had now entirely recovered of his wound received at Hanau, were to cross the Rhine below Huningen, and at Bâle; and after leaving detachments to blockade the fortresses of Huningen, Befort, and New Brisach, move on by Colmar towards Nancy and Langres. Lastly, the eighth, under Barclay de Tolly, with the splendid Russian guards and reserves, was to take the direction from Bâle to Langres, as a reserve to Giulay and Wrede; and the ninth, under Wittgenstein, was to cross the Rhine at Fort Louis, below Strassburg, and after leaving detachments to observe Strassburg and Landau, advance towards the Vosges mountains; and, after crossing them, take the direction of Nancy. Thus this great army was to be spread over an immense line nearly three hundred miles in breadth, from Strassburg to Lyons, occupying the whole country between the Rhine and the Rhone; and how vast soever its forces might be, there was reason to fear that, from their great dispersion, no very powerful body could be collected on any one point, and that possibly its detached corps might be outnumbered by the comparatively diminutive, but more concentrated troops of the French Emperor.[1]

[1] Dan. 21, 23. Vaud. i. 122, 123.

69. Plan of Blucher's invasion.

Blucher's army, at the same time, received orders to prepare for active operations; and it was accordingly brought, about Christmas 1813, to the close vicinity of the Rhine, between Coblentz and Darmstadt. Unbounded had been the impatience of the ardent veteran at the

delay of two months which had succeeded the advance of the Allies to the Rhine; and he never ceased to urge upon the Allied sovereigns that they should not give Napoleon time to recover from his defeats, but move with the utmost expedition across the Rhine to Paris. At the same time, however, with a caution which could hardly have been expected from his impetuous character, he dissembled his wishes, and, in the hope of throwing the enemy off their guard, spread abroad the report that the invasion of France was to take place on the side of Switzerland, and that he, much to his regret, was merely to maintain a defensive position on the right bank of the Rhine. The better to give currency to these reports, he busily employed himself in purveying for the wants of his troops, as in winter-quarters. At length, on the 26th December, the long-wished-for orders arrived, and the Prussian general immediately made preparations for concentrating his troops and crossing the Rhine. His instructions were of the simplest description—to cross the river, form the blockade of Mayence, and without heeding the other fortresses on the Moselle and the Meuse, to push forward, never halting, across France into Champagne, so as to be in readiness, by the 26th January, to join Prince Schwartzenberg between Arcis and Troyes.[1]

[1] Vaud. i. 118, 119. Dan. 23, 24. Koch, i. 105, 106.

70. Plan of operations assigned to Bernadotte.

These were the armies which were destined to commence immediate operations for the invasion of France; but the force of the Prince-Royal of Sweden was also concentrated on the Lower Rhine, and was intrusted with a subordinate, but very important part in the general plan of operations. It was well known that this ambitious prince, distracted between his obligations to the Allies, and his hopes of being advanced, upon Napoleon's fall, to the throne of France, was very much at a loss how to proceed, and felt great reluctance at engaging in any invasion which might embitter the feelings of the French people against him, and endanger

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the brilliant prospects which he flattered himself were opening before him. Aware of these peculiarities in his situation, the Allied sovereigns assigned to Bernadotte and his powerful army the less obtrusive, but still important part of completing the conquest of Holland, delivering Flanders, besieging Antwerp, and, in general, pressing Napoleon on his north-eastern frontier. To co-operate in these important operations, so interesting to England, and involving the very matters connected with the Scheldt which had originally led to the war,[1] Sir Thomas Graham, who had returned to England on account of ill health after the passage of the Bidassoa, was despatched with nine thousand British troops to Holland, and landed at Rotterdam in the end of December. The movements of the Prince-Royal, however, were to the last degree tardy. It was long before his operations against the Danes in the north of Germany were concluded; and all the ardour of the generals under his command could not bring forward his numerous columns to co-operate in the general attack upon France; until, fortunately for the common cause, the firmness of Lord Castlereagh overcame his repugnance, and two of his corps were brought up at the decisive moment to reinforce Marshal Blucher, where they rendered the most important service to the cause of Europe.[2]

[1] *Ante*, ch. ix. § 120.

[2] Lond. 27. Dan. 18, 19. Alexander to Bernadotte, Oct. 29, 1813.

71. Feelings of the Allied armies at this period.

The whole troops which were assembled for the final operations of the war were animated with the highest spirit, and buoyant with the most sanguine expectations. More even than the awful catastrophe of the Moscow campaign, the result of the German contest had roused an enthusiasm, and spread a confidence, among the Allied forces, which, under adequate guidance, rendered them invincible. The disasters of the French could no longer be ascribed to the cold. Inequality of numbers could not palliate repeated defeats on equal fields; unconquerable spirit in the patriot ranks, irresistible ardour in the commencement of the campaign, had evidently supplied

the want of military experience, and overwhelming force had prostrated consummate talents at its close. Confidence, therefore, was now founded on solid grounds. The long-established military *prestige* of the French armies had passed over to the other side: it is by the last events that the opinion of the great bulk of men is always determined. To the ardent passion for liberation which had characterised the war of independence, had succeeded, now that the deliverance had been effected, another desire scarcely less general, and to warriors, perhaps, still more exciting; that of obliterating the recollection of former defeats by the magnitude of present triumphs, and making the enemy drain to the dregs the cup of humiliation he had so long held to their own lips.

72. Extraordinary enthusiasm which prevailed.

Indescribable was the ardour which this passion awakened in the Allied ranks. All had wrongs to avenge, insults to retaliate, disgraces to efface; and all pressed on with equal eagerness to effect the hoped-for consummation. The Russians were resolute to return at Paris the visit paid to them at Moscow—the Austrians to retaliate on the French the destruction of the ramparts of Vienna —the Prussians to replace the sword of the Great Frederick at Sans-Souci, accompanied by the sabre of Napoleon from the Tuileries. In fine, the common feeling in the Allied armies at this period cannot be better expressed than in the words of Marshal Blucher, in a letter written on 31st December 1813:—"At daybreak to-morrow morning I shall cross the Rhine; but before doing so, I intend, together with my fellow-soldiers, to wash off in the waters of that proud river every trace of slavery. Then, like free Germans, we shall set foot on the frontiers of the great nation which is now so humble. We shall return as victors, not as vanquished, and our country will hail our arrival with gratitude. Oh! how soothing to us will be the moment when our kinsmen shall meet us with tears of joy!"[1]

[1] Blucher to his son, Dec. 31, 1813. Dan. 24.

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But although the forces of the alliance were thus vast, and the spirit of its armies thus elevated, no small anxiety pervaded the minds of its chiefs; and the great objects of the confederacy never were nearer being frustrated than when on the point of accomplishment. Success was already beginning to spread its usual seeds of discord among the sovereigns; separate interests were arising with the prospect of common spoil; ancient animosities reviving with the cessation of common danger. The Emperor of Austria, naturally solicitous for the continuance in the hands of his daughter and her descendants of the sceptre of France, had communicated to his cabinet an anxious desire to postpone, by all means in their power, the adoption of extreme measures against Napoleon; and the whole address of Metternich was employed to attain the object of humbling the once-dreaded conqueror sufficiently, to render him no longer formidable to his neighbours, and tractable to their wishes, without actually precipitating him from the throne. The Emperor of Russia, on the other hand, actuated by no such interest, more intimately acquainted with the character of the French Emperor, and smarting under the recollection of severe wrongs, both personal and national, which he had experienced at his hands, was strongly impressed with the necessity, at all hazards, of prosecuting the war with the utmost vigour against him; and never ceased to maintain, that it was by such means only that the peace of Europe could be secured, and the independence of the adjoining states placed on a solid foundation.[1]

73. Incipient divisions among the Allied chiefs.

[1] Lond. 241, 249. Dan. 3-8.

In this opinion the King of Prussia, who, when he drew the sword, had thrown away the scabbard, and whose dominions lay immediately exposed to the first burst of returning vengeance on the part of Napoleon, entirely acquiesced. But still the weight of Austria, the talents of Metternich, and the necessity of not hazarding anything which might break up the confederacy, ren-

74. Incipient divisions between Russia, Prussia, and Austria.

dered the adoption of the bolder game a matter of great difficulty; and more than once, in the course of the short campaign which followed, had wellnigh frustrated the principal objects of the alliance. The danger was the more imminent, that serious jealousies were already breaking out among the lesser powers in Germany, as to the manner in which their separate interests were to be arranged after the great debate of the Revolution had subsided; that the pretensions of Russia to Poland, of Prussia to Saxony, and of Austria to Italy, were already exciting no small disquietude among far-seeing statesmen; and that even among the diplomatists of England, at the Allied headquarters, a considerable difference of opinion existed as to the course to be pursued in future;—Lord Aberdeen deferring to the views of Metternich, that, to preserve a due equipoise in Europe, peace on reasonable terms should be concluded with the French Emperor; and Sir Charles Stewart, with Lord Cathcart, being inclined to the bolder counsels of Lord Castlereagh, which tended to the entire dethronement of Napoleon, and held, that no lasting peace could be looked for in Europe without "the ancient race and the ancient territory" for the French nation.[1] *

[1] Lond. 241, 253. Dan. 3-10. Cap. x. 335, 336, 366.

But, whatever germs of future division might be arising in the Allied councils, there was no stay in the moral torrent which now rolled with impetuous violence towards the French frontier, and no change in the noble

* "If Napoleon were forced from the throne of France, much difference of opinion might exist on the great question of a successor. I was clearly of opinion, that the re-establishment of the Bourbons would be more acceptable to England than any other arrangement which could possibly be made. Others maintained that it might be policy to keep Buonaparte on the throne, with his wings clipped to the utmost, in preference to restoring the hereditary princes, who might again assume a sway similar to the times of Louis XIV., and become formidable alike to England and the powers on the Continent. The difficulty at this crisis consisted in fixing upon the fundamental principles to be adopted, and the points to be obtained; and it seemed indispensable that the government of England should send their minister of foreign affairs to the theatre of action, as no one could act with the same advantages."—Lord Londonderry's *War in Germany*, 244.

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75. Proclamation of the Emperor of Russia to his troops on crossing the Rhine.

sentiments with which their chiefs strove to animate their warriors. It was in these words that, on the eve of crossing the Rhine, Alexander thus addressed his troops:—"Warriors! Your valour and perseverance have brought you from the Oka to the Rhine. We are about to cross that great river, and enter that proud country with which you have already waged such cruel and bloody war. Already have we saved our native land, covered it with glory, and restored freedom and independence to Europe. It remains but to crown these mighty achievements by the long-wished-for peace. May tranquillity be restored to the whole world! May every country enjoy happiness under its own independent laws and government! May religion, arts, science, and commerce, flourish in every land for the general welfare of nations! This, and not the continuance of war and destruction, is our object. Our enemies, by piercing to the heart of our dominions, wrought us much evil; but dreadful was the retribution: the divine wrath crushed them. Let us not take example from them: inhumanity and ferocity cannot be pleasing in the eyes of a merciful God. Let us forget what they have done against us. Instead of animosity and revenge, let us approach them with the words of kindness, with the outstretched hand of reconciliation. Such is the lesson taught by our holy faith: Divine lips have pronounced the command, 'Love your enemies; do good to them that hate you.' Warriors! I trust that, by your moderation in the enemy's country, you will conquer as much by generosity as by arms, and that, uniting the valour of the soldier against the armed, with the charity of the Christian towards the unarmed, you will crown your exploits by keeping stainless your well-earned reputation of a brave and moral people."[1]

[1] Dan. 15, 16.

Memorable words! not merely as breathing the noble feelings of the sovereign, who thus, in the moment of victory, stayed the uplifted hand of conquest, and sought

76. Reflections on the moral character of the war.

to avenge the desolation of Russia by the salvation of France, but as indicating the spirit by which the contest itself was animated on the part of the Allies, and the strength of that moral reaction which, based on the principles of religion, had now surmounted all the interests of time, and communicated its blessed spirit even to the stern warriors whose valour had delivered the world. When Napoleon crossed the Niemen, he addressed his followers in the words of worldly glory; he struck the chord which alone could vibrate in the hearts of the children of the Revolution: he said of Russia, "Fate drags her on; let her destinies be fulfilled."[1] When Alexander approached the Rhine, he spoke to his soldiers in the language of the Gospel: he strove only to moderate the ferocity of war; he ascribed his victory to the arm of Omnipotence. Such was the spirit which conquered the Revolution: this it was, and not the power of intellect, which delivered the world; and when Providence deemed the time arrived for crushing the reign of infidelity, the instruments of its will were not the forces of civilisation, but the fervour of the desert.

[1] *Ante*, ch. lxxi. § 73.

"——And now all earth
Had gone to wrack with ruin overspread,
Had not the Almighty Father, where he sits
Shrined in his Sanctuary of Heaven secure,
Consulting on the sum of things, foreseen
This tumult, and permitted all, advised,
That his great purpose he might so fulfil,
To honour his anointed Son, avenged
Upon his enemies, and so declare
All power on him transferred."

*Paradise Lost*, vi. 669.

## CHAPTER LXXXV.

LAST STRUGGLE OF NAPOLEON IN FRANCE.—FROM THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE CAMPAIGN TO THE ARMISTICE OF LUSIGNY. JAN. 1—FEB. 18, 1814.

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1. Remarkable coincidences of the passages of the Rhine, in the fall of the Roman and French empires.

"On the 31st December 406," says Gibbon, "the united and victorious army of the Suevi, the Vandals, and the Burgundians, crossed the Rhine, when its waters were most probably frozen, and entered without opposition the defenceless provinces of Gaul. This memorable passage of the Northern nations, who never afterwards retreated, may be considered as the fall of the Roman empire in the countries beyond the Alps; and the barriers which had so long separated the savage and civilised nations of the earth, were from that fatal moment levelled with the ground."[1] On that day fourteen hundred and seven years—at midnight on the 31st December 1813—the united and victorious army of the Russians, Prussians, and Austrians, at the same place crossed the same river; and that memorable passage may justly be regarded as the fall of the French empire beyond the Rhine! History has not preserved a more striking example of the influence of physical and lasting causes on the fortunes of the human species, or of that permanent attraction which, amidst all the varieties of religion, civilisation, language, and institutions, impels the brood of winter to the regions of the sun.

[1] Gibbon, ch. 30.

But if this extraordinary coincidence demonstrates the

2. Different characters of the two invasions.

permanent influence of general causes on the migration and settlements of the species, the different character and effects of the two invasions show the vast step which mankind had made in the interval of fourteen hundred years which separated them. "The banks of the Rhine," continues the same author, "before the barbarians appeared, were crowned, like those of the Tiber, with elegant houses and well-cultivated farms; and if a poet descended the river, he might express his doubt on which side was situated the territory of the Romans. This scene of peace and plenty was suddenly changed into a desert, and the prospect of the smoking ruins could alone distinguish the solitude of nature from the desolation of man. The flourishing city of Mentz was surprised and destroyed, and many thousand Christians were inhumanly massacred in the church; Worms perished after a long and obstinate siege; Strassburg, Spires, Rheims, Tournay, Arras, Amiens, experienced the cruel oppression of the German yoke; and the consuming flames of war spread from the banks of the Rhine over the greater part of the seventeen provinces of Gaul. That rich and extensive country, as far as the ocean, the Alps, and the Pyrenees, was delivered to the barbarians, who drove before them, in a promiscuous crowd, the bishop, the senator, and the virgin, laden with the spoils of their houses and altars."[1] The same provinces were invaded fourteen hundred years after by the confederated Austrians, Prussians, and Russians, the descendants of those whose track had been marked by such frightful devastation; but how different the inroad of the civilised and Christian from the rude and barbarian host! No sacked cities marked the progress of Alexander's march—no slaughter of unarmed multitudes bespoke the triumph of the Allied arms; the plough and the anvil plied their busy trade in the midst even of contending multitudes; and but for the occasional ruin of houses, or wasting of roads, on the theatre of actual conflict, the traveller would have been

[1] Gibbon, ch. 30.

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at a loss to tell where the track of invasion had passed.* The changes of time make no alteration on the durable causes which direct the progress of conquest, or determine the ultimate fate of empires; but they modify in the most important manner their spirit and effects. They have not averted the sword of northern valour, but they have tempered its blade, and mitigated its devastation.

3. Passage of the Rhine, and invasion of France. Dec. 31, 1813.

Atlas, Plate 93.

On the 26th December, orders were secretly despatched to the different corps of Blucher, communicating the time and place of crossing the Rhine; and the troops were brought up on the succeeding day to their respective points of destination. Sacken was to effect his passage near Mannheim, by means of a flotilla which had been collected at the confluence of the Neckar; York and Langeron, on a bridge of boats at Caubé, near Bacharach; while St Priest was to force his way across opposite to Coblentz, by means of the boats on the Lahn, and by the aid of the island of Niederworth, opposite to that town. During the night of the 31st, Sacken's corps, which had the King of Prussia at its headquarters, assembled at the spot where the Neckar falls into the Rhine. On the opposite bank was a redoubt, which commanded the mouth of that river and the town of Mannheim, and which it was necessary to carry before a bridge of boats could be established. At four on the following morning, a party of Russian light infantry was embarked in boats and rafts; and, favoured by the thick darkness, succeeded in crossing to within a few yards of the opposite bank before they were discovered. The French immediately opened a vigorous fire of cannon and musketry, and successive detachments of the Russians required to be brought over before the work could be

* A few weeks after hostilities had ceased, the author visited the theatre of war at Paris; and in Champagne, especially in the vicinity of Soissons, Craone, and Laon, the scene of such obstinate and repeated conflicts in March 1814, no traces of devastation were to be seen, except a few burnt houses and loop-holed walls in places where severe fighting had actually occurred.

carried ; while the bright flashes of the guns illuminated the opposite bank, and displayed the dense masses of the invaders on the German shore, crowding down to the water's edge, burning with ardour, but in silent suspense awaiting the issue of the enterprise. At length the redoubt was carried at the fourth assault ; and its garrison, consisting of three hundred men, were made prisoners. The rising sun showed the Russians established on French ground, and in possession of the intrenchment. Strains of martial music, resounding from all the regiments, now filled the air ; the King of Prussia, coming up to the victors, was greeted with loud cheers, and the passage proceeded without interruption. By six o'clock in the evening the pontoon bridge was completed, and the whole corps passed over ; while at the same time Blucher in person, with Langeron and York, crossed the Rhine without opposition at Caubé, and St Priest effected his passage at Coblentz with very little fighting. In one of the squares of the city, the prefect, on the occupation of Moscow by the French, in 1812, had erected a monument, with the inscription, "In honour of the memorable campaign of 1812." Colonel Mardenke, who had been appointed Russian commander of Coblentz, left the monument untouched, but under the inscription caused the following words to be cut—"Seen and approved by the Russian commander of Coblentz in 1814."[1]*

[1] Dan. 25, 26. Koch, 106, 107, i. Vand. i. 129. Fain, 24. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 174, 177. Plotho, iii. 33, 36.

The Grand Army under Schwartzenberg had entered the French territory at a still earlier period. On the night of the 20th December, six Austrian columns passed

* The inscriptions in the square in front of the church of St Castor in Coblentz, are in these lines :—

AN. MDCCCXII.
MÉMORABLE PAR LA CAMPAGNE
CONTRE LES RUSSES,
SOUS LA PRÉFECTURE DE JULES DOAZAN.

VU ET APPROUVÉ PAR NOUS, COMMANDANT RUSSE DE LA VILLE DE COBLENTZ.
1 JAN., 1814.

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4. Entrance of Prince Schwartzenberg into Switzerland and the Jura.

the Rhine, between Schaffhausen and Bâle, and immediately inundated the adjacent districts of Switzerland and France. This immense body, above two hundred thousand strong, shortly after pursued, under their different leaders, their respective destinations. Bubna, with his corps, which was the left wing, marched by the flat country of Switzerland towards Geneva; Hesse-Homburg, Colloredo, Prince Louis of Lichtenstein, with Giulay and Bianchi, forming the centre, took the great road by Vesoul towards Langres; while Wrede, the Prince-Royal of Würtemberg, and Wittgenstein, with their respective corps, which composed the right wing of the army, crossed below Bâle, between that town and Strassburg, and moved across Lorraine and Franche-Comté, until they arrived abreast of the centre on the road to Langres. None of these corps met with any opposition. Victor, who had not above ten thousand combatants at his disposal, after providing for the garrisons of the fortresses on the Upper Rhine, was unable to oppose any effective barrier to such a prodigious inundation; it spread almost without resistance over the whole level country of Switzerland, and, surmounting the passes of the Jura, poured with fearful violence into the plains of Lorraine.[1]

Dec. 21.

[1] Koch, i. 74, 82. Dan. 20, 21. Vaud. i. 120, 124. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 71. Plotho, iii. 24, 28.

5. March of the different columns.

The march of the different columns met with hardly any interruption. Count Bubna arrived in ten days before Geneva, which capitulated at once, the garrison being permitted to retire into France. After occupying that city, he sent out detachments, which made themselves masters, with as much ease, of the passes of the Simplon and the Great St Bernard; thus interposing entirely between France and Italy, and cutting off the communication between Napoleon's forces and those of the Viceroy on the plains of Lombardy. The French garrison retired to Lyons, whither they were followed, early in January, by the Austrian commander, who, however, did not deem himself in sufficient strength to attack Augereau, who was now at the head of fifteen thousand men in that important

Dec. 30.

Jan. 3.

Jan. 17.

city. He contented himself, therefore, with observing the town at a little distance, and occupying the whole course of the Ain from the Lake of Geneva to its walls. Meanwhile the centre, in great strength, pressed forward on the high-road from Bâle to Paris, by Montbeliard, Vesoul, and Langres. Vesoul was entered early in January; Besançon, Befort, Huningen, were invested a few days afterwards; while Victor, wholly unable to withstand the concentrated masses of five corps of the enemy, numbering eighty thousand sabres and bayonets in their ranks, and finding himself inadequate to the task assigned him by Napoleon, of defending the passes of the Vosges mountains, fell back, after some inconsiderable skirmishes, towards the plains of Champagne. In vain Mortier was ordered up by the Emperor to support him on the road to Paris by Troyes: even their united forces were inadequate to make head against the enemy; and on the 16th the important town of Langres, the most valuable, in a strategetical point of view, in the whole east of France, from the number of roads of which it commands the intersection, was abandoned by the two marshals, and immediately taken possession of by the Allied forces.[1]

Jan. 7, 9, 11, and 13.

[1] Jan. 17. Fain, 23, 25. Koch, i. 80, 87. Vaud. i. 151, 153. Dan. 21, 22. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 98, 117. Clausewitz, vii. 327.

6. Operations of the army of Silesia.

While the south-eastern provinces of France were thus overrun by the Allies under Schwartzenberg, the progress of the army of Silesia, led by the impetuous Blucher, on the side of Mayence, was not less alarming. The cordon of troops opposed to them, in no condition to withstand such formidable masses, fell back at all points towards the Vosges mountains. Marmont, who had the chief command in that quarter, retired on the 3d of January to Kayserslautern, so often the theatre of sanguinary conflict in the earlier periods of the war. Unable, however, to maintain himself there, he retreated behind the Sarre, the bridges of which were blown up, and shortly after took a defensive position between Sarre-Louis and Sarreguemines. But the two corps of York and Sacken having

Jan. 3.

Jan. 7.

Jan. 9.

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concentrated in his front, he did not feel himself in sufficient strength to withstand an attack, and resumed his retrograde movement toward the Moselle. Blucher upon this divided his army into two parts, York being intrusted with the pursuit of Marmont, and the observation of the powerful fortresses of Metz, Thionville, and Luxembourg ; while he himself, with Sacken's corps, marched to and occupied the opulent and beautiful city of Nancy, the keys of which he sent, with a warm letter of congratulation, to the Emperor Alexander. Meanwhile Langeron, with his numerous corps, forming not the least important part of the army of Silesia, having crossed the Rhine at Bingen on the 3d, had completed the investment of Mayence and Cassel, detaching only one of his divisions, that of Olsoofief, to support his veteran commander. But Blucher himself, burning with ardour, advanced with indefatigable activity, though the force under his immediate command was reduced, by the numerous detachments and fortresses to be blockaded in his rear, to less than thirty thousand men. With this inconsiderable body, wholly composed, however, of Russian veterans, he not only opened up a communication by his left with the Grand Army at Langres, but himself pushed on to Brienne, which he occupied in force. His advanced column was even moved forward to St Dizier, which was taken after a sharp conflict with Marmont's rearguard.[1]

Jan. 25. ] Dan. 27, 28. Vaud. 148, 151. Koch, i. 107, 125. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 90, 96.

7. General result of these movements.

Thus, in twenty-five days after the invasion of the French territory had commenced, the Allied armies had succeeded, almost without firing a shot, in wresting a third of it from the grasp of Napoleon. The army of Silesia had conquered the whole country from the Rhine to the Marne, crossed the former frontier stream, as well as the Sarre, the Moselle, and the Meuse ; passed the formidable defiles of the Vosges and Hundsruck mountains, and finally descended into the open and extensive plains of Champagne. Schwartzenberg's forces had in a

month passed the upper Rhine, and traversed part of Switzerland, surmounted the broad and lofty ridge of the Jura, and wound in safety through its devious and intricate valleys; overrun the whole of Franche-Comté, Lorraine, and Alsace, descended into the plains of Burgundy, and entered into communication, by means of its right wing, with the army of Silesia, along the valley of the Meuse, while its left had occupied Geneva and the defiles of the Ain, and threatened Lyons on the banks of the Rhone. Thus their united forces stretched in an immense line, three hundred miles in length, in a diagonal direction across France, from the frontiers of Flanders to the banks of the Rhone. All the intermediate country in their rear, embracing a third of the old monarchy, and comprehending its most warlike provinces, was occupied, its fortresses blockaded, and its resources lost; and the vast masses of the Allies were converging from the south-east and north to the plains of Champagne, and the vicinity of Chalons. That town had been already immortalised by the dreadful battle, decisive of the fate of Europe, which had taken place there, fourteen hundred years before, between Attila and the forces of the Roman empire under Aetius—a striking proof of the permanent operation of those general causes which, amidst every variety of civilisation and military skill, and in every era of the world, bring the contending hosts which are to determine its destinies to the same theatres of conflict.[1]

[1] Koch, i. 125. Dan. 29, 34. Vaud. i. 147, 155. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 54, 76.

8. Movements of the army of Bernadotte.

The army of the Crown Prince of Sweden, which threatened France on the side of Flanders, though not so far advanced as the hosts of Blucher and Schwartzenberg, was still making some progress, and caused sensible disquiet to the French Emperor. Of that army only three corps were ready to take a part in the war; the remainder, with the Crown Prince himself, who was in no hurry to approach the theatre of final conflict, being still in Holstein, or the neighbourhood of that duchy.

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These three corps, however, were slowly advancing to the scene of action: the first, commanded by the Duke of Saxe-Weimar, had crossed the Lech at Arnheim, and was moving through Flanders; another, under Bulow, was before Antwerp, where it was supported by a body of nine thousand British troops under Sir Thomas Graham; and part of a third, under Winzingerode, was at Düsseldorf, on the Rhine. But the remainder did not reach France till the middle of February. Chernicheff, who commanded Winzingerode's advanced guard, was burning with anxiety to cross the river; and at length, though with no small difficulty, extracted a reluctant consent from his more circumspect commander to attempt the passage at the confluence of the Roer. It was effected with little difficulty on the 12th January: the French, astonished at the boldness of the enterprise—undertaken in open day, of crossing a broad river surcharged with masses of ice, in the front of armed redoubts—opposing hardly any resistance.[1]

Jan. 12.

[1] Dan. 29, 32. Koch, i. 127, 132. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 80, 84. Plotho, iii. Beil, 16.

9. Which occupies Flanders, and advances towards Laon. Jan. 15. Jan. 18.

Winzingerode's corps now slowly advanced towards Brussels: and Macdonald, who commanded the French forces in that quarter, fell back with his troops in all directions. Juliers was speedily evacuated, Liege was soon after blockaded, and in a few days taken by the Cossacks; while Macdonald abandoned all the country between Brussels and the Rhine, and concentrated his forces at Namur. A division of three thousand foot and six hundred horse, despatched by General Maison from Antwerp, to endeavour to drive the Cossacks out of Liege, was defeated after an obstinate engagement at Saint Tron, near the gates of that city, by Benkendorf and Chernicheff; a success which not only secured the possession of the town, but, what was of still more importance, gave the Allies the command of the passage of the Meuse. Discouraged by this check, General Maison made no further attempt to retard the advance of the enemy: Macdonald retired, in obedience to the commands of Napoleon, towards Laon,

Jan. 24.

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abandoning all the open country of Flanders to the enemy, and leaving Antwerp to its own resources. Namur was immediately occupied by Winzingerode, but he was compelled to halt there some days, in consequence of the small amount of force, now reduced to thirteen thousand men, which the necessity of blockading so many places in his rear left at his disposal. Bulow meanwhile formed the blockade of Antwerp, and Macdonald was rapidly falling back towards Laon and Chalons; so that the whole forces of the Allies occupied a vast line, above five hundred miles in length, extending from Antwerp by Namur, Brienne, Langres, and Auxonne, to Lyons, from the banks of the Scheldt to those of the Rhone.[1]

[1] Koch, i. 127, 185. Dan. 29, 33. Plotho, iii. 39, 47.

10. General result of these operations.

Thus, within a month after they had commenced the invasion of the French territory, the Allies had gained in appearance, and in one sense in reality, very great advantages, without either sustaining loss or experiencing resistance. Above a third of France had been conquered; the resources of that large portion of his dominions in men and money were not only lost to Napoleon, but, in part at least, gained to the invaders. The *prestige* of his invincibility was seriously lessened by so wide an inroad upon the territory of the great nation. But, on the other hand, to a commander possessed of the military talent and discerning eye of the French Emperor, his situation, though full of peril, was not without its advantages, and he might with reason hope to deal out upon the plains of Champagne strokes equal to the redoubtable blows which first laid the foundation of his fame on the Italian plains. The force at his disposal, though little more than a third of that which was at the command of the Allies, was incomparably more concentrated. His troops were all stationed within the limits of a narrow triangle, of which Paris, Laon, and Troyes formed the angles: while the vast armies of his opponents, stretching across France from the Scheldt to the Rhone, were alike unable either to combine their movements with accuracy,

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or to succour each other in case of disaster. The views of the cabinets which directed them were by no means in unison. Austria, leaning on the matrimonial alliance, was reluctant to push matters to extremities, if it could by possibility be avoided; Russia and Prussia, influenced by no such connexion, were resolute to push on, at all hazards, to Paris; while the councils of England, which in this diversity held the balance, were divided between the expedience of taking advantage of the present commanding position of the Allied armies to secure a glorious peace, and the chance, by pursuing a more decided policy, of precipitating the revolutionary dynasty from the throne. Thus it might reasonably be expected that the military councils of the Allied cabinets would be as ruinous as their diplomatic divisions; and Napoleon entertained sanguine hopes that, while the Austrians, in pursuance of the temporising system of Metternich, hung back, the Russians and Prussians, led by the bolder views of Alexander and Blucher, might be exposed to attack with equal chances, and possibly at an advantage.[1]

[1] Dan. 33, 34. Koch, i. 135, 136. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 175, 194.

11. Preparations of Napoleon to mar the invasion.

An attentive observer of the prodigious flood of enemies which was inundating his territories, Napoleon was, during the first three weeks of January 1814, indefatigable in his efforts to prepare the means of arresting it. He was first informed of the invasion of his territories when coming out of his cabinet on his way to the meeting of the legislative body, which has been already described.[2] Preserving his usual firmness, he said: "If I could have gained two months, the enemy would not have crossed the Rhine. This may lead to bad consequences; but alone I can do nothing: if unaided, I must fall; then it will be seen that the war is not directed against me alone." His exertions were mainly employed in organising and despatching to the different armies the conscripts who were daily forwarded to Paris from the southern and western provinces of the empire,[3] and replacing the garrisons in the interior from which they were

[2] *Ante*, ch. lxxxiv. § 27.

[3] Thib. ix. 480, 481. Fain, 26, 27. Moniteur, Dec. 1. 1813, to Jan. 24, 1814.

drawn by National Guards, or levies who had not yet acquired any degree of military consistency. These troops, as they successively arrived, were reviewed with great pomp in the Place Carrousel; but their number fell miserably short of expectation, and evinced in the clearest manner that the military strength of the empire was all but exhausted.

12. His devices to conceal his real weakness.

The better to conceal his real weakness, and in the hope of imposing at once on his own subjects and his enemies, the most pompous account of these reviews was uniformly published next day in the *Moniteur;* and the numbers who had defiled before the Emperor announced at four or five times their real amount; insomuch that, in a single month, more than two hundred thousand men were enumerated, and it would have been supposed the Emperor was about to take the field with a force as great as that with which he had combated the preceding year on the Elbe. But no one knew better than the Emperor the real amount of the troops at his disposal; and the moment they had defiled before the windows of the Tuileries, every sabre and bayonet was straightway hurried off to the armies in front of the Allies, which, according to old usage, were divided into eight corps, though they did not in all muster above a hundred thousand effective combatants in the field. Yet so great was his dread, even in this extremity, of democratic excitement, that it was only on the 8th of January—a fortnight before he set out to take the command of the army—that, by a decree, he again organised a National Guard in Paris. Even when he did so, especial care was taken, by the nomination of Marshal Moncey to the command, and by the selection made both of officers and privates to fill its ranks, to show that it was established rather to guard against internal agitation than foreign aggression, and that the real enemy it was intended to combat was to be found, not in the bayonets of the Allies, but in the workmen of the Faubourg St Antoine.[1]

[1] Fain, 26, 27. Thib. ix. 481. Cap. x. 331, 332. Moniteur, Dec. 1, 1813, to Jan. 24, 1814.

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13. Napoleon's final dispositions before setting out for the army. Jan. 20.

Previous to setting out to take the command of his troops, Napoleon made his final dispositions for the government during his absence from the capital. To announce his immediate arrival with the army, he sent forward Berthier some days before he himself set out, and meanwhile he organised with Savary and the Council of State the means of maintaining tranquillity in the capital, and carrying on the direction of affairs. The regency was conferred by letters-patent on the Empress Marie Louise; but with her was conjoined on the day following his brother Joseph, under the title of lieutenant-general of the empire. On the 23d the Emperor prepared a military solemnity, calculated to rouse the national feelings in the highest degree. It was Sunday; and, after hearing mass, he received the principal officers of the National Guard in the apartments of the Tuileries. The Empress preceded him on entering the apartments; she was followed by Madame de Montesquieu, who carried in her arms the King of Rome, then a lovely child of three years of age. His blue eyes and light hair bespoke his German descent; but the keen look and thoughtful turn of countenance betrayed the mingled Italian blood. He wore the uniform of the National Guard, his golden locks fell in luxuriant ringlets over his rounded shoulders, and his little eyes beamed with delight at the military garb in which he was now for the first time arrayed.[1]

[1] Fain, 44, Cap. x. 534.

14. His touching speech to the National Guard at Paris.

Napoleon took the child by the hand, and advancing into the middle of the circle, with his head uncovered and a solemn air, he thus addressed them:—"Gentlemen, I am about to set out for the army: I intrust to you what I hold dearest in the world—my wife and my son. Let there be no political divisions: let the respect for property, the maintenance of order, and, above all, the love of France, animate every bosom. I do not disguise that, in the course of the military operations which are to ensue, the enemy may approach in force to Paris: it will only be an affair of a few days; before they have

elapsed I shall be on their flanks and rear, and annihilate those who have dared to violate our country." Then, taking the noble child in his arms, he went through the ranks of the officers, and presented him to them as their future sovereign. Cries of enthusiasm rent the apartments; many tears were shed; a sense of the solemnity of the moment penetrated every bosom; and cold, indeed, must have been that heart which did not then thrill with patriotic ardour. The apartment where this memorable scene occurred was the same which, twenty years before, had witnessed the degradation of Louis XVI., when that unhappy monarch had been compelled to put on the red cap of liberty, and Napoleon had witnessed with such indignation the tumultuous assemblage which thronged the gardens of the Tuileries.[1] On the following day Napoleon made all the necessary preparations for his departure, burned his most secret papers, and gave his final instructions to Joseph and the Council of State. At three in the morning of the 25th, he embraced the Empress and his son FOR THE LAST TIME, and set out for the army. He never saw them again. Revolution had run its course; in the very spot where its excesses commenced, its chief began to drink the bitterest draught of the waters of affliction. Fate destined for the father, mother, and son, unheard-of reverses or disgrace. For Napoleon—Elba, Waterloo, St Helena; for the Empress—the exile of Parma, and the disgrace of the Count de Neipperg; for the heir of the Imperial fortunes, a brief discrowned life and the simple tomb of Schoenbrunn.[2]

[1] *Ante*, ch. vii. § 71, *et seq.*

[2] Fain, 44, 45. Cap. x. 534, 535. Moniteur, Jan. 25, 1814. Bign. xiii. 230.

15. Arrival of the Emperor at Chalons, and his first measures there.

Count Bertrand, in the absence of Berthier, accompanied Napoleon in his carriage; they breakfasted at Chateau-Thierry, and arrived in the afternoon at Chalons-sur-Marne, where the headquarters of the army were established. The presence of the Emperor, as usual, restored confidence both to the troops and the inhabitants, which the long-continued retreat and near approach of the enemy to the capital had much impaired. Shouts of

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"Vive l'Empereur!" broke from the crowds which assembled to witness his passage through any of the towns which he traversed; with them were mingled the exclamation, "A bas les droits réunis!" They did not cry, "A bas la conscription!"—a deplorable proof of the selfishness of human nature; they strove rather to save their own money than the blood of their children. Napoleon spent the evening in receiving accounts from his officers of the position of the troops and the progress of the enemy. They were sufficiently alarming. The Grand Army of Prince Schwartzenberg, descending by several roads from the Vosges mountains, was pressing in vast numbers through the plains of Burgundy, and already threatened Troyes, the ancient capital of Champagne; Blucher had passed Lorraine, reached St Dizier, and was rapidly stretching, in communication with the Grand Army, across to the Aube. The French troops, falling back on all sides, were converging towards Chalons: Victor and Ney, after having evacuated Nancy, had already reached Vitry-le-Français; while Marmont was between Saint Mihiel and Vitry, behind the Meuse. Twenty days of continued retreat had brought those scattered bands, which lately had lain along the line of the Rhine, from Huningen to Bâle, to within a few leagues of each other, in the plains of Champagne. Disorder and confusion, as usual in such cases, were rapidly accumulating in the rear. Crowds of fugitives, which preceded the march of the columns, crossed and spread consternation among the advancing bodies of conscripts which were hastening up from Paris; and already that dejection was visible among all ranks, which is at once the forerunner and the cause of national disaster.[1]

[1] Fain, 61, 66. Vaud. i. 176, 179. Jom. iv. 524, 525. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 206, 213.

By the concentration of the retiring columns, however, Napoleon had collected about seventy thousand effective combatants, of whom fifteen thousand were admirable cavalry; and although part of these were still at a considerable distance from the centre of action, yet he wisely

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16. Napoleon assumes the offensive, and marches against Blucher. Jan. 26.

resolved at once to assume the offensive. Twelve hours only were devoted to rest and preparation at Chalons, and on the 26th headquarters were advanced to Vitry. Early on the following morning the march was resumed; and at daybreak the advanced guards met the leading Cossacks of Blucher's army, which were moving from St Dizier, where they had passed the night, towards Vitry. The Russians, wholly unprepared for any such encounter, were taken at a disadvantage, and worsted. The victorious French, with loud shouts, re-entered St Dizier, which had been some days in the hands of the Allies, where they were received with the most lively enthusiasm. The Allied generals, meanwhile, inspired with undue confidence by the long-continued retreat of the French troops, and ignorant of the arrival of the Emperor at Chalons, were in a very unprepared state to receive an encounter. Blucher, with characteristic impatience and recklessness of consequences, had formed his army into three divisions, which advanced in different lines, and widely separated from each other. He himself with twenty-six thousand men having advanced to Brienne, where headquarters were established; while York, with twenty thousand Prussians, was at St Mihiel on the Meuse, and Sacken was at Lesmont, fifteen miles distant. Thus Napoleon, by his advance to St Dizier, had cut the army of Silesia in two, and he had it in his power either to fall on one of these detached corps with an overwhelming force, or to defile towards Chaumont and Langres, to repel Schwartzenberg and the Grand Army. He resolved to adopt the former plan, justly deeming Blucher the most resolute as well as formidable of his opponents; the one, therefore, whom it was both most probable he might take at a disadvantage, and most important that he should disable by an early disaster. He continued, therefore, his march against the Prussian general without interruption, plunged without hesitation into the forest of Der,[1] which could only be crossed in that direction by

[1] Jom. iv. 526. Fain, 70, 71. Dan. 51, 52. Vaud. i. 186, 187. Plotho, iii. 104, 107. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 215, 219.

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deep country roads: on the 28th he reached Montierender, and on the day following, by daybreak, the army was advancing in great spirits against Blucher, who lay within half a day's march, at Brienne, wholly unconscious of the approaching danger.

17. Preparatory movements on both sides.

Had Napoleon reached the Prussian general before he had received any intimation of his approach, it is certain that a great disaster would have befallen him; for he had only under his immediate command two divisions of Olsoofief's corps, that of Sacken being at Lesmont, at a considerable distance. About noon, however, an officer was brought in prisoner with despatches, which proved to be of the highest importance, as they contained an order from Napoleon to Mortier to draw near and co-operate in a general attack on Blucher at Brienne. This at once revealed the presence of the Emperor, and the imminence of the danger. The Prussian general instantly sent off orders to Sacken to advance to his support with all possible expedition; and prepared himself to retire towards the Aube if he was attacked by superior forces, as his whole cavalry was already across that river, and the open plains of Champagne exposed the infantry to great risk should they combat without that arm. At this critical moment, when he was every instant expecting to be attacked, Count Pahlen's cavalry of Wittgenstein's corps, belonging to the Grand Army, appeared in rear, and, on Blucher's request, immediately marched forward to the front of Brienne. Forming on the road by which the enemy was expected, this body of horse covered Sacken's movement from Lesmont. Intelligence of Napoleon's advance at the same time reached Schwartzenberg at Chaumont; and Alexander, who had arrived there that very day from Langres, immediately gave instructions to Barclay, with the Russian guards and reserves, to come up with all possible expedition from the rear. At the same time, he sent out orders in all directions for the concentration of the Grand Army.[1] But before the orders

[1] Jom. iv. 526, 527. Dan. 51, 52, Fain, 70, 71. Vaud. i. 184, 185. Plotho, iii. 108, 109.

could be received the blow had been delivered, and Blucher had been exposed to a rude encounter at Brienne-le-Château.

18. Napoleon drives the Russians into Brienne. Jan. 29.

The French troops encountered the most serious obstacles, and underwent dreadful fatigue all the 28th, in forcing their way through the deep and miry alleys of the forest of Der. The frost, which it was expected would have removed every difficulty, had given way, and the thaw which succeeded had rendered the execrable cross-roads all but impassable. It was only by the greatest efforts that the guns and artillery-waggons could be dragged through; but by the zeal and ardour of the peasants of the forest, who harnessed themselves to the guns, and toiled night and day without intermission, the difficulties were at length overcome; and on the morning of the 29th, the troops were extricated from the wood, and on their march across the open country to Brienne. The curate of Maizière acted as their guide; he had escaped from the hussars of the Prussians, and threw himself before Napoleon, who recognised in him an old college companion at Brienne, whom he had not seen since they studied together, equal in rank and prospects, twenty-five years before! Soon the troops approached the town, and discovered the Prussians drawn up in successive lines in front of its buildings, and strongly occupying with their artillery the beautiful terraces which lie along its higher parts.[1]

[1] Fain, 72, 73. Vaud. i. 185. Jom. iv. 526. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 221, 224.

19. Description of Brienne, and of the Allied position.

Brienne stands on a hill sloping upwards to the castle, which stands on an eminence adjoining its summit; and its streets, after the manner of those in Genoa and Naples, rise in successive tiers above each other to the highest point. Olsoofief's guns, with Pahlen's dragoons, occupied, as an advanced guard, the great road between it and Maizière; and it was absolutely necessary at all hazards to keep possession of that line, as it commanded the only access by which Sacken could effect his junction with the commander-in-chief.[2] This duty was most gallantly per-

[2] Dan. 54, 55. Fain, 72, 73. Vaud. i. 185, 187. Jom. iv. 526, 527. Personal observation.

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formed by these brave officers, and the ground allotted to them strenuously maintained, from two in the afternoon, when the action commenced, till the whole of Sacken's corps had defiled through the streets, and effected its junction with the infantry of Olsoofief in rear, when they gradually retired towards the lower part of the town.

20. Successful attack on the town and castle of Brienne. Jan. 29.

Encouraged by the retreat of the enemy's rearguard, Napoleon now pressed vigorously on with all the forces he could command; and from the successive arrival of fresh troops, while the action was going on in front of the town, they were very considerable. His numerous guns were hurried forward to the front, and, opening a concentric fire on the town, discharged a shower of bombs and shells which speedily set it on fire, and reduced to ashes a considerable part of its buildings, including the college where Napoleon had been educated, where he had passed the happy and as yet unambitious days of childhood, and where he had learned the art of war which he now let loose with such devastating fury on the scenes of his infancy. A column of infantry, through the flaming tempest, burst into the town, and charging, amidst the spreading conflagration, through the streets, took twelve Russian guns. A battery, however, which Sacken established, commanding the French left, checked the advance of the troops destined to support this vigorous onset; and Pahlen's and Wassilchikoff's dragoons charging the assailants in flank, they not only lost the guns they had taken, but were driven out of the town with the loss of eight pieces of their own. The fire continued with great vigour on both sides till nightfall, but the town remained in the hands of the Russians; gradually it slackened as darkness overspread the horizon; and Blucher, deeming the battle over, retired to the chateau to rest a few hours after his fatigues, and survey from its elevated summit the position of the vast semicircle of watch-fires, which marked the position of the enemy to the west of the town.[1]

[1] Die Grosse Chron. ii. 214, 217. Dan. 54, 55. Vaud. i. 188, 189. Fain, 72. Beauchamps, i. 185, 186. Plotho, iii. 104, 105.

21. Imminent danger of Blucher on this occasion.

He was still on the top of the building, when loud cries were heard in the avenues which led to it, immediately succeeded by the discharge of musketry, and vehement shouts at the foot of the castle itself. The old marshal had barely time to hasten down stairs, accompanied by a few of his suite, when it was carried by a body of French grenadiers, who, during the darkness, had stolen unperceived into the grounds of the chateau. In his way to the town, he was told by a Cossack, who came riding up at full speed with the account, that the French had again burst into Brienne; and, by the light of the burning houses, he distinctly perceived a large body of the enemy coming rapidly towards him at full trot. Even in this extremity, however, the marshal would only consent to turn aside into a cross lane, where he was leisurely proceeding off at a walk, when Gneisenau, seeing that the enemy were rapidly gaining upon him, said, "Can it be your wish to be carried in triumph to Paris?" Blucher upon this put spurs to his horse, and with difficulty regained his troops. About the same time, several French squadrons charged with loud hurrahs along the street, where Sacken was issuing orders. There was neither time nor avenue to escape, and with great presence of mind he backed his horse into the shadow of a house in the street, which was the darker from the glare of the flames behind it, while the furious whirlwind drove past: the dragoons in their haste taking no thought of, nor even observing, him who two months afterwards was governor of Paris! Blucher upon this ordered the town to be cleared of the enemy, which was immediately done; but though Olsoofief advanced to the attack of the castle, he was always repulsed with loss: the assailants, from the light of the burning houses, being distinctly seen, while the defenders were shrouded in darkness. At two in the morning, the Prussian field-marshal drew off his whole force to the strong position of Trannes, on the road to Bar-sur-Aube, where the Grand Army was;[1] and the

[1] Fain, 73, 74. Dan. 55, 56. Jom. iv. 526, 527. Vaud. i. 189, 191. Lab. ii. 156, 157. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 224, 227. Volderndorf, iv. 8.

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smoking and half-burnt ruins of Brienne remained entirely in the possession of the French.

22. Results of the battle, and imminent danger of Napoleon.

In this bloody affair the Russians only were engaged: both parties fought with the most determined resolution, and each sustained a loss of about three thousand men—a great proportion, considering the numbers who combated on either side. It is a remarkable circumstance, characteristic of the desperate chances of the death-struggle which was commencing, that at the very time when Blucher and Sacken so narrowly escaped being made prisoners, Napoleon himself was still nearer destruction; and a Cossack's lance had all but terminated the life which still kept a million of armed men at bay. The bulk of the French army was bivouacking in the plain between Maizière and Brienne; and the Emperor, after having inspected their positions, was riding back, accompanied by his suite, to the former town, in earnest conversation with General Gourgaud, when General Dejean, who commanded the patrol in front, suddenly turned and cried aloud, "The Cossacks!" Hardly were the words spoken, when a party of these enterprising marauders dashed across the road: Dejean seized the foremost, and strove to plunge his sabre in his throat. The Cossack, however, disengaged himself, parried the blow, and, continuing his career, made with his lance in rest at the horseman with the cocked hat and gray riding-coat who rode in front. A cry of horror arose in the Emperor's suite: Corbineau threw himself across the lancer's path, while Gourgaud drew his pistol and shot him dead, so near Napoleon that he fell at his feet! The suite now rapidly came up, and the Cossacks, ignorant of the inestimable prize almost within their grasp, and seeing the first surprise had failed, dispersed

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and fled. On the day following, the Emperor, perceiving that the enemy had entirely evacuated Brienne, transferred his headquarters to its castle. The sight of the scenes of his youth, and of the sports of his boyhood,

recalled a thousand emotions, to which he had long been a stranger. The past, the present, and the future flitted in dark array before him; and he strove to allay the melancholy of his reflections by magnificent projects for the future restoration of Brienne, and the establishment of a palace or a military school, or both, in the much-loved cradle of his eventful career.[1]

[1] Fain, 74, 76.

23. Concentration of the Grand Army. Jan. 31.

Meanwhile the Allied generals, now thoroughly alarmed, made the most vigorous efforts to concentrate their forces. Early on the morning of the 30th, the whole Grand Army marched to Trannes, with the exception of Wittgenstein and Wrede's corps, which were ordered to Vassy and St Dizier to cover the right, and open up a communication with York's corps, which was approaching from that direction. At the same time, Blucher's troops were drawn together from all quarters; and the Allies, having now concentrated an overwhelming force in the two armies, resolved to give battle. Above a hundred thousand men were assembled under the immediate command of the Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia, exclusive of Colloredo's men, twenty-five thousand more, who were at Vandœuvres during the action; and Wittgenstein's detached corps. The 31st passed over without any offensive movement on either side, while the Allied troops were rapidly coming into line—an inactivity on the part of Napoleon so inexplicable, considering that he was inferior in force, upon the whole, to his antagonists, and therefore was certain to lose by giving them time to concentrate, that Alexander more than once was led to doubt whether he was really with the opposite armies.[2]

[2] Fain, 76, 77. Burgh. 110, 111. Vaud. i. 196. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 228, 230.

24. And of the army of Silesia.

Meanwhile the Allies, in admirable order, took up their ground; and their generals, from the heights of Trannes, which overlooked the whole adjacent country, anxiously surveyed the theatre of the approaching battle. The centre, consisting chiefly of the Russians under Blucher's command, was posted on the elevated ridge of

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Trannes, with Barclay de Tolly's reserve behind it; the hereditary Prince of Würtemberg's corps composed the right wing, which stood at Getanie; Giulay's Austrians formed the left with Colloredo in reserve. With great delicacy, Schwartzenberg intrusted the general command of the whole to Blucher, who had commenced the conflict with such spirit on the preceding day. Upon this, Napoleon, finding himself overmatched, and that the Allied army, instead of being surprised in detail, was perfectly prepared and hourly increasing in strength, made dispositions for a retreat. But previous to this it was necessary to restore the bridge of Lesmont, the only issue by which his columns could recross the Aube. The French line was drawn up directly opposite to that of the Allies, and extended from Dienville on the right, through LA ROTHIÈRE and la Gibérie in the centre, to Chaumesnil and Morvilliers on the extreme left; forming the two sides of a right-angled triangle, facing outwards, of which la Gibérie was the turning point.[1]

[1] Dan. 62, 63. Vaud. i. 196, 197. Fain, 76, 77. Burgh. iii. 112. Plotho, iii. 116, 117.

25. Order of battle on either side.

Atlas, Plate 94.

Perceiving that, contrary to his previous custom, Napoleon remained motionless awaiting an attack—a striking indication of the altered state of his fortunes—Schwartzenberg gave orders to Blucher to commence the battle, and it took place on the 1st of February. The weather was dark and gloomy: a cold wind, swelling at intervals into fitful gusts, driving heavy snow-showers before it, obscured everything till one o'clock in the afternoon, when the sky cleared, and the receding mist discovered the French army, about fifty thousand strong, drawn up in order of battle. Gérard commanded the right, Marmont the left, and Napoleon himself directed the centre, having Mortier, Ney, and Oudinot in reserve, immediately behind it. To distinguish the Allied troops, who belonged to six different sovereigns, and were in every variety of uniform, from the enemy, orders were given that they should all, from the general to the private

soldier, wear a white band on the left arm. The adoption of this badge made General Jomini suggest to Alexander, that it might give rise to surmises as to the intentions of the Allied sovereigns regarding the Bourbons. "What have I to do with them?" replied the Czar: a striking proof how much even those who are intrusted with the supreme direction of affairs are themselves impelled in the most important events by a power of which they are the unconscious and unforeseeing instruments.[1]

[1] Dan. 64. 65. Vaud. i. 196, 197. Burgh. 112, 113. Kausler, 476. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 223, 225.

The monarchs now gave the orders to attack; and Prince Schwartzenberg having sent a confidential officer to inquire of Blucher what plan of attack he would recommend, instead of specifying movements, he replied —"We must march to Paris; Napoleon has been in all the capitals of Europe: we must make him descend from a throne which it would have been well for us all that he had never mounted. We shall have no repose till we pull him down." Meanwhile Giulay advanced on Dienville, the Prince of Würtemberg on la Gibérie, Sacken on la Rothière, Wrede on Morvilliers. So heavy was the ground, that Niketin, who commanded Sacken's artillery, was obliged to leave half his guns in position on the ridge of Trannes, and harness the horses belonging to them to the other half, thirty-six in number, with which he advanced to the attack. Ten fresh horses were in this way got for each of the heavy guns, six to the light, and five to the caissons; and with this additional strength the cannon were dragged through the deep clay, and formed in line under a heavy discharge from the French artillery. The infantry destined for their protection being still far in the rear toiling through the miry fields, Napoleon caused a large body of horse to charge the guns; but the Russian cannoneers, with admirable coolness, placed the charges under cover of their cloaks close beside the pieces, to save time in carrying them;[2] and having done so, withheld their fire till the

26. Battle of la Rothière. Feb. 1.

[2] Dan. 66, 67. Burgh. 112, 113. Vaud. i. 248, 250. Beauch. i. 196, 197. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 241, 242.

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horse were within six hundred yards, when they opened so tremendous a discharge, that the assailants were quickly obliged to retreat. Snow then fell with such thickness, that the nearest objects were hardly visible; the additional men and horses were sent back for the thirty-six pieces left behind at Trannes, which were brought to the front before the darkness cleared away.

27. Great success of the Russians on the right centre.

While this was going on in front, the infantry and cavalry of Sacken's corps approached, and the action commenced at all points. The Prince of Würtemberg drove the enemy from a wood which they occupied in front of la Gibéric, and threading his devious way through a narrow path between fishponds, at last reached the open country, and immediately commenced an attack on the villages of la Gibérie and Chaumesnil, which were carried after a bloody struggle. Napoleon upon this directed a portion of his Guards and reserves to regain these important posts, which formed, as it were, the salient angle of his position, and supported their attack by the concentric fire of a large part of his artillery. The efforts of these brave men proved successful, and the villages were regained; but the Prince returned to the charge in front, supported by Wrede, who assailed them in flank, and by their united efforts the village of la Gibérie was again won and permanently held by the Allies. Meanwhile Sacken in the centre led his troops in beautiful array against la Rothière and the French batteries adjacent. So steady was their advance, that the infantry were in many places headed by their regimental bands. Count Lieven, with the vanguard, pushed the attack with such vigour, that he reached the church of la Rothière, around which a bloody conflict arose, although the snow fell so thick, that the combatants were frequently obliged to suspend their fire, from being unable to see each other. At this critical moment the Russian dragoons, under Lanskoy and Pantchenlidzeff, advanced, broke the French cavalry, and, follow-

ing up their success, charged and captured a battery of twenty-eight guns in the enemy's centre. At the same time the Prince of Würtemberg made himself master of a battery of nine guns between la Gibérie and la Rothière, turned sharp to his left, attacked the latter village in flank, and expelled the French from every part of it; while Wrede carried Chaumesnil and Morvilliers, with twelve guns, on the extreme left of the line. Thus the French centre and left were entirely broken through and beaten; and although their right still stood firm at Dienville, and had repulsed all the attacks of Giulay's Austrians, yet the battle before six o'clock seemed to be clearly decided in favour of the Allies.[1]

[1] Dan. 67, 68. Lab. ii. 161, 162. Koch, i. 250, 252. Burgh. 114, 118. Plotho, iii. 120, 121. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 243, 245, 247.

28. Napoleon's last attack, and final defeat.

Napoleon, however, had been too long a victorious general to despair as yet of the contest. Oudinot came up opportunely from the neighbourhood of Lesmont with two fresh divisions; and the Emperor, putting himself at the head of the dragoons of Colbert and Piri, and bringing up every disposable gun he had left, directed a general attack on la Rothière. Perceiving the concentration of the French forces on this decisive point, Blucher, too, put himself at the head of his reserves, and advanced to sustain the encounter. It was late when these two redoubtable antagonists met in arms; the shades of night already overspread the field, which was only partially illuminated by the feeble rays of the moon. The first attack of the French was irresistible; the village was carried amid loud cheers; but the Emperor of Russia immediately brought up the grenadier regiments of Little Russia and Astrachan, which again drove the enemy out at the point of the bayonet, the whole grenadier corps and cuirassiers of the Guard being brought up to support the assault. In the struggle which ensued, the division Duhesme was almost entirely destroyed. Both parties fought with the utmost resolution. Napoleon and Blucher in person directed the attacks;[2] but at length the French were overpowered and driven out of

[2] Dan. 68, 69. Lab. ii. 162, 164. Vaud. i. 252, 253. Koch, i. 183, 186. Burgh. 117, 118. Plotho, iii. 121, 122. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 246, 247.

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the greater part of the village; while at the same time Giulay on the extreme right of the French, at midnight, after a sixth assault carried Dienville. The whole villages and ground held by the French in the commencement of the battle were now in the hands of the Allies; and Napoleon, seeing the day irrecoverably lost, gave orders to burn the portion he still held of la Rothière, and drew off his shattered troops to Brienne, under cover of the thick darkness of a winter's night.

29. Results of the battle, and desperate condition of Napoleon.

The cause of Napoleon appeared now altogether desperate. He had suddenly collected his troops and made a fierce irruption into the heart of the enemies' armies; but instead of striking any of his former terrible blows, he had met everywhere with the most obstinate resistance; his onset had served as the signal for the concentration of their vast armies, and he had finally been defeated in a pitched battle on the ground which he himself had chosen. In the last action he had lost six thousand men, including a thousand prisoners, and seventy-three pieces of cannon, wrested from him in fair fight; while the Allies were only weakened by two-thirds of that number. The *prestige* of a first victory was lost by him, and gained by his opponents. Nine thousand of his best soldiers had fallen, or been made prisoners, since hostilities had recommenced; discouragement, almost despair, was general in his ranks; and it was difficult to see how the future advance of a host of enemies was to be arrested, when less than a half of their armies had defeated so well-conceived and daring an enterprise by his whole disposable force. Nor did subsequent events weaken the force of this impression: on the contrary, they strongly confirmed it, and seemed to presage the immediate dissolution of the French power. Napoleon returned at midnight to Brienne; and such was his anxiety lest the enemy should take advantage of the confusion of his retiring columns to make a nocturnal attack, and complete his ruin, that,

not content with incessantly asking if there was anything new, he himself stood for some hours at the windows of the chateau of Brienne, which overlooked the field, anxiously watching to see if any unusual movement around the bivouac fires indicated the commencement of an irruption. Nothing, however, prognosticated such an event; the flames were steady, and gradually declined as night advanced; and at four on the following morning, the Emperor, satisfied he was not pursued, gave orders for a retreat by Lesmont to Troyes.[1]

[1] Plotho, iii. 126. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 251, 252. Fain, 78, 79. Jom. iv. 527, 528. Dan. 70, 71.

30. Great exultation in the Allied army at this success.

This first and most important victory, gained on the soil of France over the arms of Napoleon, produced the most unbounded transports in the Allied armies. During the progress of the action, Alexander and Frederick William were spectators from the heights of Trannes of the success of their arms, and testified the most lively sense of their gratitude to the victorious generals and chiefs by whom it had been effected. "Tell the field-marshal," said the former to Blucher's aide-de-camp, "that he has crowned all his former victories by this glorious triumph." The day after the battle, the sovereigns, ambassadors, and principal generals, supped together in the chateau of Brienne; and Blucher, striking off, in his eagerness, the necks of the bottles of champagne with his knife, quaffed off copious and repeated libations to the toast, drunk with enthusiasm by all present, "*Nach Paris!*" (to Paris.) Yet, although such were the anticipations which universally prevailed, and not without reason, of an immediate march to the French capital, it may be doubted whether Blucher made as much of his superiority of force as he might have done; and whether Napoleon in his place would not have made the success at la Rothière far more decisive than it was. Certainly, if the position of the French army—forming the two sides of a right-angled triangle facing outwards, with the Aube, traversed only

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by a single bridge at Lesmont, in its rear,—and that of the Allies, pressing them with superior forces on both sides up against the impassable river, be taken into consideration, it might have been expected that more decisive results would have been obtained. In fact such would have been secured, if, instead of directing the weight of his attacks against la Rothière and la Gibérie in front, the Prussian marshal had more strongly supported the assault, which in the end proved decisive, of Wrede on Chaumesnil and Morvilliers in flank.[1]

[1] Koch, i, 186, 187. Dan. 73, 74. Personal knowledge.

31. Desperate condition of the French army in their retreat.

Atlas, Plate 93.

In truth, however, such was the discouragement and disaster which resulted to the French army from this calamitous action, that it brought Napoleon to the very brink of ruin. On the day after the battle, the army defiled in great confusion over the bridge of Lesmont; and Marmont, who was left with twelve thousand men to cover the retreat, soon found himself beset, as Victor had been by the Russians at the Beresina, by Wrede's corps, above twenty thousand strong. It was only by the most vigorous exertions, seconded by the heroic devotion of his followers, that the brave marshal succeeded in repelling the repeated attacks of the Bavarians, urged on to the charge by the personal direction of the Emperor Alexander, who exposed himself in the thickest of the fight. In the afternoon a thick snowstorm suspended the combat, and Marmont took advantage of it to withdraw his troops across the river. The Russians, disconcerted by this bloody encounter, gave no further molestation to their retreat. Nevertheless, it proved to the last degree disastrous to the French. On the day following, Napoleon with all his forces fell back to Troyes, the capital of Champagne, where Mortier with his corps was already established, erecting barricades, running up palisades, establishing batteries, breaking out loopholes in the houses of the suburbs, and making every preparation for a vigorous defence.[2]

Feb. 2.

Feb. 3.

[2] Koch, i. 196, 197. Dan. 73, 75. Jom. iv. 528. Vold. iv. 8, 82. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 261, 264.

The situation of the town of Troyes, containing twenty-two thousand inhabitants, in the midst of an extensive plain at the confluence of the Barse and the Seine, was such as to render it little capable of standing a siege; while at the same time it afforded opportunities, on the right bank of the latter river, of keeping even a superior enemy several days at bay. Napoleon resolved to make use of it for this latter temporary purpose, to gain time for the further concentration of his troops; and in this endeavour he was much aided by the dilatory conduct of Schwartzenberg in continuing the pursuit. The Austrians, Bavarians, and Würtembergers, who, from the direction which the retiring French army had taken, found themselves foremost in following it, were so tardy in their movements, that they literally lost sight of the enemy; and for two days it was unknown at headquarters whether the main body of the French had retreated in the direction of Arcis, Chalons, or Troyes. Already the secret reluctance of the Austrian cabinet to push matters to extremity against Napoleon, which exercised so powerful an influence on the fortunes of the campaign, was becoming very apparent. Yet, notwithstanding this slackness in the pursuit, such was the effect of a retrograde movement upon the spirits of the French soldiers, and such the impression produced on the minds of the young conscripts by the hardships they had undergone since they took the field in that rigorous weather, that six thousand deserted their colours, and disappeared during the retreat to Troyes; and the army reached that town fifteen thousand weaker than when Napoleon, a week before, had given the signal of advance from Chalons.[1]

32. Dilatory movements of the Allies in pursuit.

[1] Koch, i. 197, 199. Dan. 74, 75. Fain, 81, 83. Burgh. 119, 120.

The future plan of operations resolved on by the Allied sovereigns on the 2d February at the castle of Brienne, and which proved so disastrous in its consequences, as to have wellnigh rendered abortive all the vast efforts which had been made for the invasion of France, was, that the Grand Army and army of Silesia, instead of act-

33. Imprudent dislocation of the Allied armies. Feb. 2.

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ing together, or in concert, when their mass was irresistible, *should separate*, and act on different lines of operation. Blucher, with the army of Silesia, was to advance upon Chalons, and thence to follow the course of the Marne to Paris, through Chateau-Thierry and Meaux ; while Prince Schwartzenberg was to move on to Troyes, and descend the valley of the Seine by Montereau to the same capital. Want of provisions and of forage, which already began to be severely felt, if such an enormous multitude of men and horses was kept united, was the reason assigned for this most imprudent dislocation ; as if any reason short of absolute necessity could justify the separation of the two armies to such a distance that they could not render aid to each other, in the presence of such a general as Napoleon, still at the head of seventy thousand men, in a central position between them. It would seem as if, forgetting that the concentration of the two armies the autumn before had wrought out the deliverance of Germany, and that their recent union had all but secured the conquest of France, they were determined to give every facility to a prolongation of the war, and to afford to the French Emperor an opportunity for dealing out, on the right and left, those redoubtable blows by which, fourteen years before, he had prostrated Wurmser and Alvinzi on the banks of the Adige.[1]

[1] Dan. 74, 75. Burgh. 120, 124. Koch, i. 191. Jom. iv. 533.

34. Retreat of the French from Troyes, and its occupation by the Allies.

The disastrous consequences of this separation of force were speedily apparent. It was not that Schwartzenberg had not a sufficient force in his own army to crush Napoleon ; but that, separated from Blucher and the army of Silesia, the daring resolution was wanting in all but Alexander, which could alone lead to decisive results. Austrian diplomacy, anxious to save the French Emperor from a total fall, now, as on so many former occasions, became predominant over military councils ; and Napoleon, relieved from all disquietude on the side of the Grand Army of Austria, was able to turn his undivided attention to the strokes which he meditated against that

of Silesia, more immediately under the directions of Russia and Prussia. No sooner, therefore, did he receive intelligence of the separation of the two armies, and that Blucher, in obedience to his instructions, was moving towards Chalons-sur-Marne, while Schwartzenberg's huge masses were slowly drawing around Troyes, than he resolved to descend the course of the Seine towards Paris, and thus facilitate his junction with the reinforcements of veteran troops which were approaching, drawn from the army of Soult. He did this in the hope that, when he had in this manner repaired his losses, he would be enabled to strike a blow with effect against the flank of the army of Silesia, when advancing towards the capital. With this view, he allowed his troops to repose during three days at Troyes; and so imposed upon the enemy by the good countenance which he maintained in front of that town, and by a vigorous sortie which he made beyond the Barse, that the Austrian general, instead of advancing, deemed it necessary to draw back his headquarters to Bar-sur-Aube, and throw two corps across the Seine, in order to make a general attack at once on both banks. Napoleon had no intention of risking a general engagement where he stood; and his troops having somewhat recovered from their fatigues, he broke up with his whole army early on the morning of the 6th, and reached Nogent on the road to Paris on the following evening. The headquarters of the Allied army were immediately advanced, and on the 7th were established in Troyes, which they took the most anxious precautions to preserve from pillage or disorder of any sort.[1]

Feb. 5.

Feb. 6.

[1] Fain, 84. 85. Dan. 77, 78. Burgh. 122, 123. Koch, i. 201, 203.

35. Extreme depression in the French army.

Though the retreat of the French army down the Seine to Nogent was a prudent measure, profoundly calculated, and which speedily led to the most brilliant results, yet it produced at first the most ruinous effects upon the army. The hopes of the soldiers were entirely dissipated by this long-continued retreat; it was seriously feared that Paris itself would ere long be abandoned: the cause of Napo-

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leon, and of the Revolution, seemed at an end. They felt the same despair as the Russians had done in retiring from Smolensko towards Moscow. The troops marched in sullen and gloomy silence over the wet and dreary roads: the ominous question, "Where are we to stop?" was in every mouth. Nor were the spirits of the troops revived when they reached Nogent, and the army, receiving orders to halt, made preparations by mining the bridge, loopholing the houses, and barricading the streets, to dispute the passage of the Seine. Moreover, the most disquieting intelligence was received from all quarters. The defection of Murat was announced from Italy; Antwerp was blockaded by the Anglo-Prussian army; Liege and Aix-la-Chapelle were occupied; Brussels had been evacuated; Flanders was lost; General Maison was rapidly falling back to the old frontiers of the monarchy; while the unresisted march of Blucher to Chalons, which he had occupied on the 5th, clearly indicated a resolution to advance on Paris by the route by which it was most assailable, and where scarcely any force existed to arrest his progress. The troops, profoundly affected at having so long to retire before the enemy, were now deserting by crowds; the sides of the road were covered with arms, cloaks, and haversacks, thrown down in despair; twelve thousand conscripts had left their standards since the battle of la Rothière, making the total loss since hostilities recommenced not less than twenty thousand: and the despatches from Caulaincourt, who was engaged in the conferences which had been opened at Chatillon, announced that the demands of the Allied sovereigns, rising with the successes of their arms, were no longer limited, as at Frankfort, to the recognition of the frontier of the Rhine, but pointed to the reduction of France within the ancient limits of the monarchy.[1]

[1] Fain, 84, 86. Dan. 76, 78. Koch, i. 202, 203. Burgh. 123, 124. Lab. ii. 172.

Such was the magnitude of the losses which the French army had sustained since the opening of the campaign, especially in cavalry, that a fresh organisation of that

arm, to conceal the frightful chasms in its ranks, had become necessary. It took place at Nogent, and continued unchanged till the conclusion of the war. The cavalry had previously been divided into six corps; but such had been the enormous amount of its losses, that, even with the aid of successive remounts, sent from the depots in the interior, it could only now make out four, of which two were composed of only three divisions each. Grouchy obtained the general command of the whole, and the corps under him were intrusted to Count Bordesoult, Count St Germain, Count Milhaud, and Kellermann, now created Count de Valmy. In addition to this, there was the cavalry of the Guard, consisting of five divisions, under Laferrière, Lefebvre-Desnouettes, Colbert, Guyot, and Defrance; and such was the activity displayed in pushing reinforcements into this service, that it soon numbered in its ranks fifteen thousand admirable horsemen. The skeleton of a new corps of infantry was also formed, under Oudinot, on the Seine below Nogent, and at Bray, composed of the divisions Leval and Boyer de Rebeval, which were now coming up from the army of the Pyrenees, and of various bodies of conscripts hurried forward from the depots in the interior.[1]

36. Fresh organisation of the French cavalry.

[1] Koch, i. 208. Vaud. i. 294, 295.

It was in these disastrous and all but desperate circumstances, that Napoleon conceived and executed one of those hardy, yet prudent measures, which have justly rendered his name immortal. Rightly judging that he need not disquiet himself about the Austrians—whose slow and methodical movements, ever kept subordinate to the mysteries of diplomacy, were now more than ever circumspect, from the peculiar position of their emperor making war on his own son-in-law—he cast his eyes on Blucher, whose bolder movements, since the separation of the armies, were both more fitted to excite solicitude and afford opportunity. The progress of the Prussian marshal, since he had been left at liberty to act for himself, had been so rapid as to have excited the most lively

37. Napoleon resolves to attack Blucher on his advance to Paris.

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apprehensions in the breasts of the Parisians. Hardly an hour elapsed that the most alarming intelligence was not received from the seat of government. The Russians and Prussians, with their ardent chief at their head, were advancing by forced marches towards the capital, and driving before them a confused and trembling crowd of peasants, women, and children, who fled at the approach of these northern barbarians. In this extremity, with disaster pressing him on every side, and the enemy's advanced posts within a few marches of the capital, Maret and all his councillors earnestly besought the Emperor to accept even the rigorous conditions proposed by the Allies, and make peace. But after a night passed in reflection, he replied, "No, no! we must think of other things just now. I am on the eve of destroying Blucher. He is advancing on the road to Montmirail. I am about to set off. I shall beat him to-morrow—I shall beat him the day after to-morrow: if that movement is attended with the success it deserves, the face of affairs will be entirely changed, and then we shall see what is to be done."[1]

[1] Fain, 90, 91. Dan. 96. Lib. ii. 181, 182.

33. Movements of Blucher in Champagne. Feb. 3.

The positions occupied by the army of Silesia, in all fifty-six thousand strong, at this juncture, were singularly favourable to such an enterprise. Blucher, with the corps of Sacken and Olsoofief, which had fought at la Rothière, had, in obedience to the instructions he had received, moved on the 3d through St Ouen on the road to Chalons. Meanwhile York attacked the latter town, which was garrisoned by a detachment of Macdonald's corps, and after a sharp conflict made himself master of it. That brave marshal, who was encumbered with the grand park of Napoleon's army, consisting of a hundred guns dragged by peasants' horses, upon this retired to Epernay, towards Paris; and Blucher no sooner heard of the direction of his march, than he resolved to cut him off, and for this purpose directed his troops to la Ferté-sous-Jouarre, where the two great roads from Chalons to Paris meet. The better

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to compass this design, which seemed to promise entire success, he ordered York to follow the French marshal by the highway through Epernay and Chateau-Thierry; Sacken was directed through Bergères on MONTMIRAIL; and he was to be followed at the distance of a day's march by Olsoofief, who was commanded to remain at CHAMPAUBERT till further orders. The field-marshal himself halted at Vertus, almost without troops, to await the coming up of Kleist's corps, which was hourly expected at Chalons. With the three corps united, he proposed to fall on Macdonald's troops, and having destroyed them and taken the convoy of guns, push direct on the capital, where the utmost consternation already prevailed. Sacken's advanced guard had reached la Ferté-sous-Jouarre, and the crowd of fugitives was pouring in wild disorder into Meaux. Already the litters of the wounded, and the disbanded conscripts, were beginning to be seen in Paris, where the public streets were almost deserted in the apprehension of an impending calamity. No uneasiness filled the field-marshal's breast, during this rapid advance, for the security of his left flank, though Napoleon lay in that direction, as he deemed him sufficiently occupied with watching the motions of the Grand Army; as Nogent, where the headquarters of the French were established, was thirty miles distant; and as the only approach to it was through deep cross-roads, by the marshy bank of the Petit Morin, apparently impassable at that inclement season of the year.[1]

Feb. 5.

Feb. 6.

[1] Dan. 95, 97. Lab. ii. 180, 182. Fain, 90, 91. Vaud. i. 280, 283, 292, 293. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 380, 382. Clausewitz, vii. 419.

39. Extraordinary difficulties of Napoleon's passage across the country.

Having taken his resolution, the Emperor instantly gave orders for carrying it into execution; and leaving Victor at Nogent with fourteen thousand men, to keep the Austrians in check, and Oudinot at Bray-sur-Seine at the head of ten thousand, with orders to delay them as long as possible at the passage of that river, he resolved himself to set out with the *élite* of his army, about forty-five thousand strong, for Sézanne, with the intention of falling perpendicularly on the line of Blucher's march,

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and destroying his scattered columns. He announced this design the same evening to Joseph at Paris, in a letter which fully explains his military designs at this period, and reveals the great strategist in full lustre.* On

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the 9th he broke up with this design from Nogent, and slept at Sézanne, half-way across, with the Imperial Guard, and on the following day moved on towards Champaubert. But the obstacles to the passage proved greater even than had been anticipated, and it required all the vigour and authority of the Emperor to overcome the insubordination of his troops, and conquer the difficulties of the enterprise. The spirits of the soldiers, already severely depressed when they arrived at Nogent, were sunk to the lowest degree by the hardships and difficulties of this cross-march, for which no object was apparent, and which seemed to have been undertaken for no other purpose but to leave open to the Austrian Grand Army the road to the capital. Murmurs were universal; insubordination bordered on mutiny; it was openly said, both by officers and men, that the Emperor had lost his head, and that he was fast hurrying the empire to destruction.[1]

[1] Koch, i. 208. Dan. 95, 96. Fain, ii. 92, 93. Vaud. i. 294, 298. Plotho, iii. 165. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 389, 391.

40. Which are at length overcome.

Marmont, who led the advance with his corps, found the roads so dreadful, that the artillery-drivers reported it impossible to get the guns through. In effect, notwithstanding all the efforts of the officers, the cannon and waggons stuck fast in the deep clay forest of Traçonne,

* "I start to-morrow for Sézanne, and I hope to-morrow to attack the army of Silesia. Sacken is at *Montmirail* with 15,000 men. I debouch upon him by Sézanne and Champaubert. If this operation prove entirely successful it may decide the campaign. If I succeed in two or three days in crushing the army of Silesia, I will debouch upon Nogent or *Montereau*. With your reserves I will have 80,000 men, and may give affairs an unexpected turn. My army is divided into three corps. On the right, the Duke of Reggio (Oudinot) has 25,000 men; in the centre, the Duke of Belluno (Victor) has 14,000; with myself I have 30,000 men: forming in all a force of 60,000 or 70,000 men, including the engineers and artillery. I calculate on having to deal with 45,000 men of the army of Silesia and 15,000 of Schwartzenberg's, including Bubna and the Cossacks. So that, if I beat the army of Silesia, and put it for some days *hors de combat*, I will be able to turn upon Schwartzenberg with 60,000 or 70,000 men, including the reinforcements that you will send me from

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and Marmont, despairing of success, was remeasuring his steps. When this was reported to the Emperor, he replied, "You must still advance, even if you leave the whole cannon behind you." The marshal was instantly ordered to face about and resume his march, and push through at all hazards. Couriers were despatched in all directions to the mayors of the adjacent communes to procure horses, to aid in extricating the artillery; and such was the patriotic ardour with which the assistance was furnished, that the guns and caissons were at length got through. The disorders and discouragement of the troops, however, had, now reached their acme from this accumulation of difficulties; pillage became universal, from the total want of any magazines for the supply of the troops, and, being exercised without mercy on the people of the country, gave rise to the most violent exasperation. The Emperor, after long shutting his eyes to these excesses, had at length his attention forcibly drawn to them by the destruction of a chateau, in the neighbourhood of Nogent, belonging to his own mother. Justly incensed, he issued a severe proclamation, in which he declared he would hold the generals and officers responsible for the conduct of their troops;* but the evil still continued with very little abatement, and, by preventing any cordial assistance from the peasantry to the soldiers, was one cause of the fall of Napoleon.[1] It rose from a deeper source than any regulation of discipline could rectify—the

[1] Dan. 95, 97. Koch, i. 208, 209. Fain, 92, 93. Vaud. i. 294, 303. Valent. ii. 144. Plotho, iii. 179.

Paris; and I do not think he will be able to oppose to me more than 110,000 or 120,000 men. If I do not find myself strong enough to attack him, at least I will be able to keep him in check for fifteen or twenty days; and this will make room for new combinations. As I will to-morrow attack the enemy in rear, there need be no alarm, should he push forward for La Ferté or Meaux." —NAPOLEON *to* JOSEPH, *Nogent, 9th Feb.* 1814. BIGNON, xiii. 238, 239.

* "The Emperor has to express to the army his displeasure at the excesses to which it abandons itself. Such disorders are always hurtful: but they become criminal when committed in our native country. From this day forward, the chiefs of corps and the generals shall be held entirely responsible for them. The inhabitants are flying on every side, and the troops, instead of being their country's defenders, are becoming its scourge."—*Proclamation, 8th Feb.* 1814; DANILEFSKY, 95.

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habits of systematic extortion to which the armies of the Revolution had been trained; and the want of any magazines to supply them without individual marauding; and was, in fact, the reaction of Napoleon's favourite maxim, that war should maintain war, upon himself and his own subjects.

41. Combat of Champaubert.

Atlas, Plate 95.

Early on the morning of the 10th, Marmont approached the defiles of St Gond under the eyes of the Emperor, directing his march against the village of Baye, which was occupied by a detachment of Olsoofief's corps. That general, with his gallant Russians, was lying at Champaubert in perfect security, and dreaming of nothing less than being assailed on his left flank; in which direction, from the position of Schwartzenberg's army, and the difficult nature of the intervening country, there seemed no ground for apprehending danger. Meanwhile Marmont reached the summit of the height which overlooks the valley of the Petit Morin, and beheld the Russians, about five thousand strong, with twenty-four guns, busy in preparing their breakfasts, wholly unconscious of their approaching peril. Napoleon immediately rode up to the front, and, overjoyed at the success of his movement, ordered a general attack. The Russian general, though astonished beyond measure at this unexpected apparition on his flank, drew up his men with great steadiness to resist. Some prisoners, however, taken in the skirmish near Baye, having mentioned that the Emperor was with the troops, he despatched repeated couriers to Blucher to demand assistance, and know whether he should retreat. But the field-marshal directed him to maintain himself where he was, and that succour was unnecessary, as it was impossible that he could be assailed by more than a flying detachment of two thousand men. Thus left to his own resources, the brave Russian, though well aware he had to deal with an overwhelming force, led on by the Emperor himself, prepared, like a good soldier, to maintain his post to the last extremity.[1]

[1] Dan. 100, 102. Koch, i. 234, 235. Vaud. i. 304, 305. Fain, 93. Plotho, iii. 176, 177. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 391, 392.

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Napoleon, seeing that the enemy stood firm, made dispositions for attacking them at once in front and both flanks. Lagrange with his division, followed by that of Ricard, crossed the marshes of St Gond, carried the bridge of St Prix, and drove the Russian advanced posts through the village of Baye, into Champaubert, where they rallied, under protection of their main body and artillery, which opened a most vigorous fire. Meanwhile, the French cavalry at a greater distance passed the marsh, and having gained the highroad leading from Champaubert to Montmirail, turned and attacked the Russians on their right flank, while Lagrange's division menaced their left. Despairing of maintaining his position against such an accumulation of enemies, Olsoofief sent half his guns to the rear, and, forming his men in column, marched in person to force the passage towards Etoges and Chalons, while Poltoratsky, with a brigade, was left to defend Champaubert to the last extremity. This little band defended themselves with desperate resolution till their ammunition began to fail, when they were obliged to retreat out of the village and retire across a plain, with the view of reaching the shelter of a wood at a little distance. As he drew near to this cover, Poltoratsky perceived that it was already in the hands of the enemy; and he was received by them with a volley of musketry. At the same time, the horse-artillery of the French made fearful chasms in the Russian ranks; their cavalry charged in at the openings; and the wearied square dragged its toilsome way along, moistening every step with its blood. At length, having exhausted its last cartridge, the whole of this devoted band was overpowered and made prisoners. Olsoofief himself, finding the road to Etoges occupied by the French with superior forces, struck off to the left, and endeavoured to make his way across the fields towards Pont-à-Binson; but his guns stuck fast in the deep mud, so that the enemy had time to surround the detachment,[1] which, having wholly exhausted its ammunition, was in

42. Total defeat of the Russian division.

[1] Dan. 102, 104. Lab. ii. 187, 189. Fain, 93. Koch, i. 235, 239. Plotho, iii. 176. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 392, 394.

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great part made prisoners, with the commander himself. General Corneloff, however, with General Udom, disdained even in this extremity to surrender; but collecting the remains of the corps, about two thousand strong, with twelve guns, they succeeded in breaking through the enemy, and at midnight reached Pont-à-Binson with their colours and honour unsullied.

43. Great effects of this victory, and measures of Napoleon to follow it up.

In this disastrous affair the Russians lost three thousand men, killed, wounded, and prisoners, besides twelve guns and seventeen caissons, while the French were only weakened by six hundred men. The moral effect of the triumph was still more considerable; and it was such that it wellnigh neutralised the whole effect of the previous successes, and rendered problematical the final result of the invasion. The French troops, who had been reduced to the lowest point of depression by the long-continued retreat, were elevated beyond measure by this brilliant success, which, achieved with so little loss, seemed to recall, in the midst of disaster, the brilliant days of Arcola and Rivoli. By this daring and felicitous cross-march, the initiative had been regained by the French Emperor; he had achieved the greatest feat in strategy—that, with a force inferior upon the whole to his adversaries, of being greatly superior at the point of attack; he had broken in upon the line of advance of the army of Silesia, and could at pleasure turn with a concentrated array upon any of its scattered columns. The French soldiers, intelligent beyond any other in Europe, immediately perceived the immense advantages which this brilliant cross-march had secured for them; the depression of the retreat, the disaster of la Rothière, the fatigues of the preceding days, were forgotten. Napoleon no longer appeared the insane ruler, hurrying blindfold to destruction, but the consummate commander, who prepared amidst adversity the means of regaining prosperous fortune; and that general confidence was felt which, more than either numbers or experience, frequently contributes to military success.[1]

[1] Lab. ii. 189. Fain, 93. Koch, i. 239, 240. Claus. vii. 423. Plotho, iii. 176, 177.

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Napoleon felt the whole impulse of the returning tide of victory, which had now set in to his arms. Poltoratsky, the Russian general, who had been made prisoner, having been brought before him, he exclaimed, "I now tell you, that as I have routed you to-day, I shall annihilate Sacken to-morrow; on Thursday, the whole of Wittgenstein's advanced guard will be disposed of; on Friday, I shall give Blucher a blow from which he will never recover, and I then hope to dictate peace to Alexander on the Vistula. Your old fox Kutusoff deceived me by his march on our flank: the burning of Moscow was a barbarous act—it was the work of the Russians. I took Berlin, Madrid, and Vienna, and no such thing happened." "The Russians," replied Poltoratsky, "do not repent of that sacrifice, and are delighted with its results." "Leave the room, sir!" replied the Emperor, stamping with his foot. On that very night he despatched orders to his plenipotentiary Caulaincourt, at the congress which was sitting, to gain time and *sign nothing*, as he was on the eve of the most important events. Next morning he announced his success to Macdonald, with orders to him to discontinue his retreat; and himself set off by daybreak to attack Sacken at Montmirail, leaving the corps of Marmont before Etoges to watch Blucher, who lay at Vertus, anxiously awaiting the arrival of Kleist's corps to enable him to resume the offensive. By this blow, Napoleon had cut the Silesian army into two parts, and interposed with fifty thousand men, to which his own army was now augmented, between its severed wings.[1]

44. Napoleon's subsequent movements.

Feb. 11.

[1] Dan. 106, 108. Lab. ii. 189, 190. Koch, i. 239. Plotho, iii. 178, 179. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 395, 396.

Sacken's situation was now very critical. He had received an order from Blucher, late the night before, to remeasure his steps through Montmirail toward the plains of Vertus; and the field-marshal had ordered York to join him. But the rapidity of the Emperor's movements anticipated the execution of either of these orders. At the very time that Napoleon moved from Champaubert to Montmirail, Sacken was on his way to

45. Perilous situation of Sacken.

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it, marching back from La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, which he had reached on his advance towards Paris; but the French were beforehand with him, and Montmirail was occupied by their advanced guard before the Russians approached it. Thus anticipated, and intercepted in his attempted movement to rejoin his commander-in-chief, the Russian general had no alternative but to prepare for combat. This he did the more willingly, as he relied on the approach and co-operation of York, who was near Chateau-Thierry, and who, he was aware, had received orders to join him without loss of time. Trusting with too great confidence to this assistance, Sacken, instead of inclining to his left, as he might have done, to facilitate his junction with York, resolved to push straight on, and endeavour to force his passage through the opposing columns, by the valley of the Petit Morin. He formed his troops, in consequence, in order of battle; the centre, on the great road from La Ferté-sous-Jouarre to Montmirail; the right, on the village of Marchais, near the Petit Morin stream; and the left in the open ground towards the village of Fontenelle, where it was hoped they would speedily be joined by York's corps, coming up from Chateau-Thierry.[1]

[1] Dan. 109, 110. Koch, i. 240, 241. Plotho, iii. 179, 180. Lab. ii. 189, 190. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 398, 399.

46. Battle of Montmirail.

Atlas, Plate 96.

As the French troops came up to Montmirail, they marched out of the town, and, forming on the opposite side, commenced the attack upon the Russians. The fire began at eleven o'clock, and soon became extremely warm on both sides. Forty pieces of cannon, arrayed along the Allied front, long kept the French at bay; and the village of Marchais, where Scherbatoff's infantry was posted, on the Russian right, was three times taken and retaken at the point of the bayonet. Meanwhile York himself arrived, but reported that his troops could not appear on the ground till three o'clock, and that his whole artillery had been left at Chateau-Thierry, from the experienced impossibility of dragging it forward in the wretched state of the roads. At the very time that

this depressing intelligence was received by the Allies, Mortier came up with the Old Guard, the cuirassiers, and the Guards of Honour,* to the aid of the French; and Napoleon, having now got his reserves in hand, and seeing the decisive moment arrived, ordered a general attack on the whole of Sacken's line, but taking care to direct the weight of his force against the Russian left near Fontenelle, in order to throw it back on the centre, and cut off the enemy from the line of their junction with York, or approach to Blucher.[1]

[1] Koch, i. 240, 241. Dan. 111, 112. Vaud. i. 312, 318. Plotho, iii. 180, 181. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 398, 399.

47. Brilliant victory of the French.

If the attack was vigorous, however, the defence was not less obstinate. Ranged behind hedges and in farm-offices, the Russian tirailleurs long retarded the advance of the enemy; and when at length they were forced back, the mutual fury of the combatants brought them, with loud cries on both sides, to the decisive shock of the bayonet. Success was varied in this dreadful encounter—in some places the French were forced back, in others they penetrated the Russian line; but at this decisive moment Napoleon ordered up the cuirassiers and Guards of Honour to charge the half-broken masses of the enemy. As these gallant cavaliers defiled past the Emperor, he said to them, "Brave young men! there is the enemy! Will you allow him to march to Paris?"—"We will not allow him!" exclaimed the horsemen, shaking their sabres aloft, and rending the air with their cries; and instantly breaking into a charge, fell upon the enemy with such fury that the victory in that quarter was speedily decided. In vain York now came up with several brigades of Prussians, though without artillery, which could not be dragged through the deep clay to Fontenelle and les Tourneux; they, too, were broken by the French cavalry, and shared the general ruin.[2] Ney and Mortier carried

[2] Dan. 111, 112. Koch, i. 240, 241. Fain, 94, 95. Lab. ii. 192, 193. Vaud. i. 312, 322. Plotho, iii. 180, 182. Clausewitz, vii. 424.

* A new corps of cavalry, dressed in dark-green hussar uniform, recently raised by Napoleon, composed of the young men of the first families in the country, who were equipped and mounted at their own expense; and, by being so, escaped the conscription.

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the farm of Grenots amidst vehement cheers, and drove the Russian left back upon the centre, which, with the right, retired across the fields towards Chateau-Thierry, covered by Wassilchikoff's dragoons, which, with the utmost gallantry, repulsed the repeated charges of the French cuirassiers.

48. Actions on the day following the battle. Feb. 12.

In this bloody combat, the Allies lost three thousand men killed and wounded, and a thousand prisoners, besides nine guns, which stuck fast in the mud, and could not be drawn off when the corps retreated. The French loss did not exceed one thousand. It was only by the utmost exertions, and harnessing fifty hussars and hulans with long ropes to each gun, that the remainder were got away during the darkness and confusion, while torches were displayed every hundred yards to illuminate the gloom. Napoleon passed the night at the farm-house of Grenots, sleeping on the straw, in the midst of smoking ruins from which the enemy's dead had just been removed; and next morning by daybreak he was on horseback, at the head of his Guards, to pursue the Allies. The Prussian general, Horn, was stationed to keep the enemy in check with twenty-four squadrons, which had not hitherto suffered in the conflict. He arranged these troops in two lines, the first of which charged the enemy. They were received, however, with such vigour by Ney, at the head of the French dragoons, that the first line was at once routed and driven back upon the second, which was also thrown into confusion, and fled. Immediately the French cavalry pushed on, and swept round the squares of Russian infantry, which had barely time to form in rear of the horse; two of them were broken in the tumult, and three pieces of cannon taken, besides a thousand prisoners. Meanwhile, however, the main body of the Russians and Prussians succeeded in crossing the Marne at Chateau-Thierry, and breaking down its bridges, which prevented the further pursuit of the enemy, and placed them, for the time at least, in a situation of security.[1] But in this

[1] Plotho, iii. 183, 184. Dan. 113, 114. Koch, i. 252, 253. Vaud. i. 325, 327. Claus. vii. 424.

day's combat they had lost two thousand more of their best soldiers, besides several guns abandoned in the retreat; making their total loss in the two days, seventeen guns, five standards, and six thousand men.

49. Heroic devotion of Sacken to his orders.

By directing his course to the left, and marching on the first day straight to Chateau-Thierry, without seeking to encounter Napoleon at all, there can be no doubt that Sacken might have avoided this serious disaster, and joined Blucher with his forces untouched. But his orders from the field-marshal were precise, to march to join him by Montmirail; and, like a good soldier, he obeyed his instructions, though to the evident danger of himself and his troops. Well, therefore, did he merit the encomium of the biographer of Blucher—"Sacken may have committed an error of judgment on this occasion, but it was the error of a hero too confident of his own strength: we had few generals equal to him; only such as he might hope to vanquish Napoleon."[1] But disaster was now accumulating on the army of Silesia on every side. While the Emperor in person was gaining these splendid successes against the corps of Olsoofief and Sacken, Blucher remained at Vertus, with hardly any troops at his disposal, anxiously awaiting the arrival of Kleist's and Kaptsevich's corps. It may be conceived with what impatience the impetuous veteran remained in this state of forced inaction, when fresh accounts of Napoleon's successes were every hour received; when the fugitives from Champaubert were coming straggling in, and the distant roar of the cannon at Montmirail announced Sacken's danger. But, notwithstanding his ardent desire to join his comrades, and, if he could not avert their calamities, to share their fate, he was unable to move a single step in advance, from his total want of cavalry, and the presence of Marmont with a corps of fifteen thousand men, which report had magnified to thirty thousand, at Etoges, directly between him and his lieutenants.[2]

[1] Varnhagen von Ense, Feldzug von Blucher, 274.

[2] Feb. 12. Fain, 97. Plotho, iii. 185, 186. Dan. 115. Koch, i. 235. Valentine, ii. 146. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 403, 404.

At length, however, Kleist and Kaptsevich having

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arrived, and the remains of Olsoofief's corps and two regiments of cuirassiers having joined, he advanced at the head of twenty thousand combatants to Etoges, which Marmont evacuated at his approach, retiring towards Chateau-Thierry, where Napoleon lay with the main body of his forces. An interesting scene had occurred in that town on the preceding day. The inhabitants, on the night of the action in front of the town, after the combat of Montmirail, had been overwhelmed by a mass of fugitives in disorder, who vented their rage and vexation at their defeat by every species of pillage and rapine, which all the efforts of the Russian and Prussian officers had been unable to restrain. Proportionally vivid was their joy on the following morning, when the town was evacuated by the enemy; and the indignant inhabitants, yet smarting under the brutality to which they had been subjected, went out in crowds along the banks of the Marne to meet their deliverers. Men, women, and children laboured assiduously to restore the bridges which the Russians had destroyed in their retreat, and to reconstruct a passage to their own soldiers. And when at length the boats were collected, the planks laid, and the troops began to defile across, loud shouts rent the air, and a confused multitude of all ages and both sexes, rushing forward, embraced with tears of joy the gallant warriors whose valour had delivered them from their oppressors.[1]

50. Kleist joins Blucher, who advances towards Sacken. Feb. 13.

[1] Lab. ii. 196, 197. Koch. i. 235, 236. Dan. 115. Fain, 97. Plotho, iii. 185, 186. Valentine, ii. 147. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 404, 405.

Napoleon was no sooner informed of the advance of Blucher to Etoges, and thence towards Montmirail, than he set out from Chateau-Thierry on the evening of the 13th with his Guards and the greater part of his forces, and arrived at the latter town at eight on the morning of the 14th. Marmont had just evacuated, after considerable fighting, the village of VAUCHAMPS, and was retreating along the road to Montmirail, when the well-known ensigns of the Guard were seen on the highway, and a powerful body of cuirassiers announced the presence of the Emperor. Instantaneous was the effect of this intel-

51. Battle of Vauchamps. Feb. 14.

Atlas, Plate 95.

ligence upon the spirit of the troops: it seemed as if the wand of a mighty enchanter had given an electric shock to every soldier on the field. Immediately the retreat was suspended; the cavalry, hurrying to the front, charged with boldness and rapidity; the skirmishers fell back, and gave place to deep columns of infantry, boldly advancing to the attack; the batteries were reinforced, and fired with increased vivacity; aides-de-camp were seen galloping in all directions; and the air resounded with cries of *Vive l'Empereur!* It was now the Prussian general's turn to halt, and make his dispositions for defence. Ziethen, who headed the vanguard, was soon forced back in disorder upon the main body, which had barely time to form square when a numerous body of cavalry assailed it. The German cuirassiers were speedily overthrown, and the line of horsemen, headed by Grouchy, swept round the squares on two sides: one was broken and most of the men made prisoners, but the others received them with a sustained rolling fire, and the charge was repulsed. As the increasing numbers, however, and augmented boldness of the enemy, left no doubt of the presence of the Emperor with an overwhelming superiority of force, Blucher felt the necessity of retiring, and commenced his retreat in squares, the artillery being placed in the intervals, with Kleist on the right and Kaptsevich on the left.[1]

[1] Dan. 116, 117. Lab. ii. 200, 201. Fain, 98, 99. Plotho, iii. 187, 188.

52. Glorious retreat of Blucher. Feb. 14.

And now commenced a combat, which has shed as immortal a lustre on the steadiness of the Russian and Prussian troops, as the previous brilliant successes had secured for the French Emperor and his army. The retreat was conducted along the high-road, which traverses a flat and open country, running in a straight line, as is usual in that part of France, between rows of lofty elms.[2] On this *chaussée* the artillery retired, firing incessantly as it receded on the pursuers, while the squares of infantry marched abreast of it in the fields on either side. Slowly, and in perfect order, the Allied squares fell back without

[2] Personal observation.

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either hurry or disorder, as on a field-day at St Petersburg, and then appeared in their highest lustre the marvels of military discipline. In vain the French cuirassiers, with devoted gallantry, and animated by the presence of the Emperor, swept round the steady walls of steel, and, approaching to the very edge of the bayonets, strove to force their way in, wherever the discharge of the cannon tore a chasm, or the fall of the wounded presented an opening. Instantly closing up, these noble veterans still preserved their array unbroken; and the squares, though sorely diminished, and leaving a stream of blood, flowing from the dead and the wounded, along their path, still presented an undaunted front to the enemy. Entranced with the spectacle, Blucher, forgetting his own danger, gazed on the scene, and, halting his horse, exclaimed, "See how my brave Russians fight!" Thus combating, they reached Champaubert. But, after passing through that town, the danger thickened; and such were the perils with which they were beset, that the bravest almost gave themselves up to despair.[1]

[1] Dan. 116, 117. Varnhagen von Ense, 262. Vaud. i. 333. Koch, i. 260, 261. Plotho, iii. 187. Claus. vii. 425.

53. Imminent danger of Blucher.

While the Russian troops were delayed by defiling through the narrow causeway of Champaubert, Napoleon, who had a body of seven thousand admirable horse at his command, had despatched Grouchy at the head of three thousand of the swiftest among them, by a circuit round the village; and by great exertions, that indefatigable officer had so far outstripped the slower march of the Allied column, encumbered as it was by artillery and caissons, that he had gained the high-road two miles in advance, and was established in force on it before the Allies had extricated themselves from the houses. Meanwhile Generals Bordesoult and St Germain closely followed the rear of the retreating column; and, turning it on both flanks as it emerged into the meadows on the other side of the town, charged repeatedly, though without success, on three faces at once, the now wearied and almost exhausted body. By a continued fire of cannon

and musketry, the Allies succeeded in clearing the way through their constantly increasing enemies; and they had got to within half a mile of Etoges, where the danger would cease from the country being no longer practicable for cavalry, when all at once, on surmounting an eminence, they beheld Grouchy's horsemen drawn up in battle array before them, just as the sun set; and his last rays glanced on the long line of cuirasses which, stretching far across the road on either side, seemed to present an impassable barrier to their further advance. At this appalling sight, the boldest in the Allied ranks held his breath; total defeat appeared to be inevitable; the mighty heart of Blucher shuddered at the thought, that not himself only, but the whole corps, with Prince Augustus of Prussia, were on the point of being made prisoners. "Let us die rather!" said that gallant prince, drawing his sword, and preparing to charge headlong upon the enemy. With mournful resolution Blucher stood in the front of the squares, in hopes of falling before he witnessed the disgrace of his country. "If you should be killed here," said his aide-de-camp Nostitz, "do you really think history will praise you for it?" Struck with these words, the field-marshal turned his horse's head, and said to Gneisenau—"If I do not perish to-day, then am I destined to live long, and I still hope to repair all."[1]

[1] Dan. 117. 118. Lab. ii. 200, 202. Plotho, iii. 188, 190. Koch, i. 260, 262. Beauch. i. 280, 282. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 414, 415. Varnhagen von Ense, 264.

54. Its disastrous termination.

That there was no hope, except in forcing their way through with the bayonet, was evident to all, from the commander-in-chief to the meanest private; and worthy indeed of a hero were the means which Blucher took to effect it. He commanded the drums to beat, the colours to be displayed, and, "with all the pomp and circumstance" of war, the troops to bear down in a solid mass upon the enemy. Cheered by the martial sound, fresh vigour was inspired into the soldiers' breasts; the artillery and infantry opened such a fire in front, that the chaussée was cleared, and the weighty column, preceded by its guns, marched into the forest of sabres.

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Had the horse-artillery, which Grouchy had ordered to follow him, been able to keep pace with the cavalry, the mass would probably have been broken, and the whole body, with the commander-in-chief, have been made prisoners. But it had stuck fast in the mud: the cavalry alone, without infantry or guns, was unable to withstand the shock, and the main body got through, with the commander-in-chief, Prince Augustus, and their whole staff. Enraged, however, at seeing their prey thus escaping them, Grouchy's horsemen closed on either side with such fury on the last squares, which had exhausted their ammunition, that several were broken, two Russian battalions were cut to pieces, and two Prussian regiments compelled to surrender. The Russian horse-artillery were in the most imminent danger; but their commander, Colonel Shusherin, formed the cannoneers in line, and, headed by Blucher, charged, sword in hand, right through the French cavalry, and got clear off.[1]

[1] Beauch. i. 280, 281. Lab. ii. 202. Plotho, iii. 188, 190. Dan. 118, 119. Valentine, ii. 150. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 416, 417.

55. Desperate action near Etoges.

At length the wearied and bleeding column reached Etoges, where it was hoped rest and safety would be found; but there fresh combats awaited it. At ten at night, after it was quite dark, Marmont, at the head of his corps, which was comparatively fresh, suddenly commenced an attack on General Udom's brigade, which was reposing near the entrance of the town, broke it during the confusion of a nocturnal combat, and took several guns. Following up his success, the French marshal pushed on amidst frightful confusion, and a second time the Allies found the line of their retreat to Bergères interrupted. But despair gave them almost supernatural strength. Firing and manœuvring were out of the question. In deep masses, and with loud hurrahs, they rushed upon the enemy, trampled them under foot, and, marching over their bodies, arrived at midnight at Bergères. The pursuit was now at an end: order was in some degree restored to the regiments; and, after a few hours' rest, the retreat was continued to Chalons,[2]

[2] Dan. 118, 119. Koch, i. 261, 265. Beauch. i. 282, 284. Plotho, iii. 188, 190. Lab. ii. 202, 204. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 417.

where the remains of this once splendid array arrived on the evening of the 15th, and at length found repose under cover of the Marne.

56. Results of the action.

In this terrible combat, Blucher, whose force at the commencement of the action did not exceed twenty thousand soldiers, lost six thousand men killed, wounded, and prisoners, or nearly a third of the troops engaged, fifteen guns, and eight standards. The prisoners, in number about two thousand five hundred, were almost entirely Prussians; for though several Russian squares were pierced through, and dreadful loss was sustained by them under the French sabres, hardly a man was taken; the Muscovites sternly combating to the very last, even when their ranks were broken, and further resistance in a military point of view was unavailing. The French loss did not exceed twelve hundred men. After the battle the remains of the army of Silesia converged together from Chalons and Chateau-Thierry, behind the shelter of the Marne, and collected their shattered bands in cantonments on the north-east of that river, but weakened by the loss of fully twenty thousand men since Napoleon's fatal irruption had commenced, six days before, from the side of Sézanne.[1]

Feb. 15.

[1] Plotho, iii. 190. Dan. 119. Koch, i. 264. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 416.

57. Napoleon crosses over to the valley of the Seine.

Atlas, Plate 93.

The night after the battle of Vauchamps, Napoleon returned to Montmirail, where he slept; and, deeming nothing done while anything remained to do, instead of giving repose to his wearied troops, which had now marched and fought for six days incessantly, he sent advices to Victor and Oudinot, that he would debouch on the following day in the valley of the Seine in their rear, by Guignes. The extreme badness of the cross roads, from the valley of the Marne to that of the Seine, having rendered this impossible by the direct line, he left his other troops in the neighbourhood of Chateau-Thierry and Montmirail, to watch the broken remains of the army of Silesia; and he himself, with his faithful Guards and cuirassiers, whom nothing could exhaust,

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took the route of Meaux, from whence on the following morning he turned to the left, and moved on Guignes, through the forest of Brie, by the chaussée of Fontenay. Meanwhile all Paris was thrown into transports of joy by the arrival of successive couriers, who brought intelligence of the victories of Champaubert, Montmirail, and Vauchamps. The bulletins, which exaggerated these glorious successes, diffused a universal enchantment; the genius of the Emperor seemed to have restored the days of Arcola and Rivoli; while a long column of seven thousand prisoners, taken in these combats, who were conducted along the Boulevards, preceded by military music and almost triumphal pomp, gave confirmation strong of the reality of the Emperor's achievements.[1]

Feb. 15. Feb. 16.

[1] Koch, i. 267, 270. Fain, 100, 104. Dan. 120, 121. Clausewitz, vii. 458. Plotho, iii. 238.

58. Occupation of Troyes by the Allied arms. Feb. 7.

While these memorable events were in progress on the banks of the Marne, events, attended in the end with still more important consequences, were taking place on the banks of the Seine. The Allied sovereigns had made their entry into Troyes on the 7th of February without resistance, a few hours after Napoleon with his troops had left it. Although the ancient capital of Champagne had much declined, under the government of Napoleon, from its former splendour, when it had forty thousand souls within its walls, while it could not now boast of above twenty thousand inhabitants; yet its occupation was of the highest importance, both as regarded the physical necessities and moral influence of the Allied arms. Not only had the town itself considerable resources, especially for the sick and wounded, whose number was now very large in their army, but, being the centre where all the roads and communications of the province met, or intersected each other, it afforded the most valuable facilities for the procuring of provisions, which the concourse of such prodigious bodies of men and horses had now rendered a matter of very considerable difficulty, even in the heart of France. While the advanced guard of this army, consisting chiefly of the Würtembergers and

Bavarians under Wrede, defiled along the road to Paris on the traces of Napoleon, the bulk of it, which was now concentrated, continued passing through the town for twelve hours together, exhibiting a stupendous proof of the strength of the Allied forces; for at the end of that time, independent of two corps which were pursuing the French, a hundred thousand men were encamped around the walls of Troyes.[1]

[1] Lab. ii. 170, 172. Beauch. i. 228, 230. Cap. x. 382, 383.

59. Commencement of a movement in favour of the Bourbons.

But the entrance of the Allied armies into this city was followed by a political movement of still higher importance, and which, in the end, exercised a most decisive influence on the fortunes of the Revolution, and the ultimate fate of Napoleon. It was here that the first movement in favour of the RESTORATION OF THE BOURBONS took place.

Twenty-one years had now elapsed since the blood of Louis XVI. had flowed on the Place Louis XV., and England, amidst the storm of indignation excited by his fate, had been drawn unwillingly into the contest. Such had been the whirl of events which had immediately succeeded, and such the pressing interest of the glories and catastrophes which had since occurred, that the recollection of that illustrious race had almost been lost in France, and their name had nearly disappeared from the page of European history. The ancient loyalty of the monarchy, indeed, still burned in the bosoms of a few highly descended nobles in other parts of the empire, and in many generous breasts among all classes in la Vendée; and the clergy in great part still nursed in secret a predilection for the ancient race, as for the ancient faith. But the young and active part of the population, almost all who could influence thought or determine action, had been whirled, willingly or unwillingly, into the vortex of the Revolution. An entire generation of the ancient nobles had expired under the guillotine, perished amidst the horrors of the revolutionary

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prisons, or melted away, amidst poverty and oblivion, in foreign lands. Warm as had been the sympathy, generous the hospitality, with which the emigrants had been at first received in every part of Europe, and especially in England, the rapidity of subsequent events, the intensity of subsequent interests, had been such that they were now in a great measure forgotten.

60. Extraordinary oblivion of the royal family of France during the Revolution.

Numbers of them had taken advantage of the amnesty of Napoleon to return to their beloved country : not a few had yielded to the seductions of his antechambers, and settled down in the Tuileries under the imperial, as they had done under the royal regime. Above all, the total destruction of their properties had deprived them of almost all influence both at home and abroad ; for although the sufferings of those who had been the victims of spoliation may at first excite a warm feeling of indignation, yet it insensibly gives way in process of time to the experienced inconvenience of relieving their necessities. It is rare to see a feeling of pity which can long survive repeated demands for money. The general irreligion and consequent selfishness of all the more elevated or influential classes in France, both before and since the Revolution, had deprived the cause of ancient loyalty of its only source of lasting support—a sense of duty springing from obligations superior to this world. Thus, though there were still many Royalists, especially in the provincial towns of France, they were wholly powerless as a political party. They were regarded by the active and energetic portion of the people, rather as a respectable relic of the olden time, than as a body which could ever again rise to power in the state ; and it may safely be affirmed, that without external aid the cause of the Restoration was hopeless in France, unless possibly from the sufferings produced by a long course of disastrous revolutions.

Notwithstanding all this, however, a certain organisation in favour of the exiled family had throughout all

the Revolution existed in the country, and it had recently acquired greater vigour and efficiency from the unexampled disasters which seemed to threaten the imperial dynasty with ruin. The principal ramifications of this quiescent conspiracy, as might naturally have been expected, were to be found in la Vendée, Brittany, and the south of France; but it was not without its leaders and adherents in the capital. There, some of the principal partisans of the Revolution, true to the polar star of worldly ambition, were anxiously watching the progress of events; and, without as yet engaging in any overt act against the reigning dynasty, were secretly preparing to abandon their principles and their benefactor, and range themselves on the side of whatever party might appear likely to gain the ascendency in the crisis which was approaching. The vast fabric of Napoleon's power, based on the selfish passions, and strengthened by worldly success, was already beginning to break up, even in its centre, on the approach of adversity. But, independent of these discreditable, though powerful allies, a noble band of elevated and generous spirits, alike untainted by the crimes and unseduced by the allurements of the Revolution, were bound together by the secret tie of fidelity to misfortune. Their number, indeed, as might be expected in a selfish and irreligious age, was small; but their courage was great, their constancy respectable, and their power in a crisis might be expected to be far beyond what their physical strength or political influence would have prognosticated.[1]

61. Royalist organisation existing in France.

[1] Cap. Hist. de la Rest. i. 262, 263. Beauch. ii. 44, 45.

The proceedings of the Royalist association at Bordeaux were under the direction of M. Taffard de St Germain, and included the heads of many of the noblest families in the south and west of France, especially the Duc de Duras, M. Adrien de Montmorency, M. de la Rochejaquelein, and M. de la Ville de Beaugé; while the committee in Paris embraced the Ducs de Fitzjames and de la Tremouille, M. Polignac, and M. Sosthène de

62. Royalist committees in Paris and the west of France.

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la Rochefoucalt. Though this Royalist confederacy subsisted in secret throughout all the changes of the Revolution, the Consulate, and the Empire, yet its proceedings had never assumed an active character, till the misfortunes of Napoleon, and the retreat of the imperial armies across the Rhine, afforded a prospect of a speedy political revolution. Then active conferences commenced in profound secrecy at the Chateau d'Usse in Touraine, a seat of the Duc de Duras; while the Duc de Fitzjames, and other leaders at Paris, entered the National Guard of that capital, which the Emperor had recently called out, to be in a situation to take advantage of any crisis that might be approaching.[1]

[1] Beauch. ii. 44, 47. Cap. i. 262. Hist. de la Rest. i. 262, 264.

63. Fortunes of Louis XVIII. and the Comte d'Artois during this time.

While the Royalist party, during the long and dreary years of revolutionary ascendency, were thus in silence adhering to their principles, and waiting the return of more prosperous fortune, the exiled prince, afterwards Louis XVIII., retired from one place of asylum to another as the French power advanced, till at length he was entirely driven from the continent of Europe, and forced to take refuge on the British shores. He had, in the first instance, after dwelling a few months at Hamm, established himself with his court of emigrants at Verona, where he assumed the title of regent of France; and his proceedings were mainly under the direction of a zealous and indefatigable Royalist, the Count d'Antraigues. Meanwhile the Comte d'Artois was at St Petersburg, where his credit was so high with the Empress Catharine, that the regency was recognised, and he received a splendid sword from her, with the hope "that it might open to him the gates of France, as it had done to his ancestor Henry IV." The Comte d'Artois, however, was a generous man, but not a soldier or the leader of an army; he showed so little zeal in the cause, that a project, which at one period had been agitated, of intrusting to him the command of thirty thousand Russians, to act on the coast of la Vendée, was abandoned; and he returned to

1793.

London, where he sold the sword for four thousand pounds, and distributed the price among the most necessitous of his companions in misfortune. Subsequently, the reluctance which that prince evinced to put himself at the head of the expedition to Quiberon Bay, and his return from l'Ile Dieu, without landing, to England, contributed powerfully to the disasters of that ill-fated enterprise, and called forth the loudest complaints from the gallant Chouan chiefs.[1] *

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[1] Cap. Hist. de la Rest. i. 68, 72.

64. Subsequent migrations of the royal family.

Meanwhile Louis XVIII., under the name of the Comte de Lille, lived frugally and in retirement at Verona, until the near approach of Napoleon's victorious arms, in 1796, obliged him to quit the territories of the republic, which he did, after having in vain solicited the suit of armour which Henry IV. had presented to the Senate of Venice. He afterwards established himself at Blanckenburg, where various unsuccessful efforts were made, which have already been mentioned, to induce Buonaparte to play the part of General Monk, and facilitate the restoration of the royal family to the throne of France. The implication of the Royalists, however, in the conspiracy of the Club of Clichy, in 1797,[2] rendered it necessary for Louis XVIII. to retire further from the wrath of the enraged republicans; and he withdrew to Mittau in Livonia, where he enjoyed a pension of 200,000 roubles, or £25,000 a-year, from the Emperor Paul, which sufficed for the expenses of the exiled court. He was here afterwards joined by the Duke and Duchess d'Angoulême, the former of whom had served with credit in the Royalist corps of the Prince of Condé, while the latter brought to that distant solitude the recollection of the Temple, and the sympathy and commiseration of all Europe.[3]

[2] *Ante*, ch. xxiv. § 37.

1799.

[3] Cap. i. 172, 184.

* "Sire! The cowardice of your brother has ruined all. He could not appear on this coast but to lose or save everything. His return to England has decided our fate. Nothing remains for us now but to die in vain for your Majesty."—CHARETTE *to* LOUIS XVIII., 14*th July* 1795. CAPEFIGUE, *Histoire de la Restauration*, i. 89.

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65. Who at length are driven to seek refuge in Great Britain.

The sudden and unlooked-for conversion, however, of the fickle Paul to the alliance of the First Consul, immediately brought about a rigorous order to the august exiles to quit the Russian dominions in the depth of winter. They sought refuge in Prussia, where they were only admitted as private individuals; while, during the whole time, the Comte d'Artois remained in the asylum he had obtained from the British government, in the palace of Holyrood, at Edinburgh. Louis XVIII. subsequently passed into Sweden, where he issued from Colmar, on the shores of the Baltic, two solemn protests, which have already been given, against the assumption of the imperial dignity by Napoleon.[1] He returned on the breaking out of the war between Russia and France in 1805, to his former residence at Mittau; but the peace of Tilsit, and subjection of Russia to the influence of France, having rendered that asylum no longer secure, he resolved to seek a last refuge on the British shores, and for that purpose embarked, with the whole royal family except the Comte d'Artois, who was already at Holyrood, on board the Swedish frigate Fraya, and reached Yarmouth in the middle of August 1807.[2]

Jan 21, 1801.

Dec. 2, 1804.

[1] *Ante*, ch. xxxviii. §§ 51, 57.

1805.

[2] Cap. i. 172.

66. His reception and establishment in Great Britain. Aug. 1807.

The arrival of the illustrious exiles threw the British cabinet into some perplexity. Not that they had the slightest hesitation as to giving them that refuge in misfortune, which is at once the first duty and noblest privilege of an independent state to extend to suffering innocence; but that the *character* in which they were to be received involved an important question, which had never been fairly mooted since the commencement of the war, and the decision of which might exercise an important influence upon its ultimate issue, as well as the unanimity with which it was now prosecuted by the British nation. This was nothing less than the question—whether the object of the contest was to effect the restoration of the Bourbons to the French throne, or simply to provide security and maintain independence for the British nation.

If the Comte de Lille was recognised and treated as Louis XVIII. king of France, it would involve the British government either in an interminable war with Napoleon, or in the abandonment of a sovereign whose title they had expressly and solemnly recognised; and it would afford the Opposition a pretext, of which they would gladly avail themselves, for representing the contest, not as one of defence and necessity on the part of England, but of aggression and injustice, to force upon France a dynasty of which the majority of the nation disapproved.[1]

[1] Ann. Reg. 1808, 274.

67. Difficulties with which the question as to the character of his reception in England was surrounded, and course adopted.

There appeared, also, not a little inconsistency in a nation which had itself assumed the right of choosing its rulers, now denying that right to another; and in the descendants of the house of Brunswick proclaiming to the world their recognition of the indefeasible right to that of Bourbon. Above all, it was of importance not to change the object of the war, which never had been to force a government upon an unwilling people, but solely to prevent that people from forcing one upon its neighbours; not to create a crusade for legitimacy, but to stop one for revolution. Influenced by these considerations, the majority of the British cabinet, after an anxious deliberation, which lasted three days, ranged themselves on the side of Mr Canning, who resisted the recognition of the illustrious stranger as king; and by a cabinet minute he was informed, that he should receive a secure and honourable asylum in Great Britain, but that he must not expect an express acknowledgment of his title to the throne.[2]*

[2] Cap. i. 194, 195. Ann. Reg. 1808, 274.

Louis XVIII., accordingly, resided in England till the

* "If the chief of the Bourbon family consents to live amongst us in a manner suitable to his actual situation, he will find a secure and honourable asylum; but we are too well aware of the necessity of securing for the war in which we are engaged the unanimous support of the English people, to do anything that might endanger the popularity which has hitherto attended the war. By recognising Louis XVIII. as king, we should only offer a favourable occasion to the enemies of the government to accuse it of introducing foreign interests into a war of which the object is purely British security." — *Cabinet Minute, August* 27, 1808, given in CAPEFIGUE, i. 195.

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68. Louis XVIII. lands, and remains in England.

fall of Napoleon, as a private but illustrious individual, and largely participated in the hospitality which its nobles and people have ever bestowed upon greatness in misfortune. He at first dwelt at Gosfield Hall, a seat of the Duke of Buckingham, where he was soon after joined by the Duc and Duchesse d'Angoulême, and the Duc de Berri; but in 1810 he quitted that residence for Hartwell, another seat of the same noble family, where he remained till the Restoration. The Comte d'Artois, meanwhile, continued to sojourn with a small suite at the ancient palace of Holyrood, Edinburgh. By a singular coincidence, but strongly descriptive of the vicissitudes of time, the heir-apparent to the French throne, who afterwards mounted it only to feel the bitterness of royalty, spent the long and dreary years of exile in the ancient seat of the Stuart family, in the towers which had witnessed the distresses of Mary, the most beautiful queen of France, and the most unfortunate of the queens of Britain; and in the halls where fortune for a brief period had permitted to Charles Edward, when contending on the principle of legitimacy, with the aid of a gallant people, for the throne of his fathers, the splendours of royal elevation and the enjoyment of chivalrous devotion.[1]

[1] Cap. i. 180, 196.

69. First measures of the Royalists in France.

But, how unwarlike soever the dispositions of the Bourbon princes might be, and seriously as they might prefer the pacific retreats of Hartwell and Holyrood to the cares and the honours of royalty, the time at length arrived when it was no longer possible for them to remain in privacy; and when, willing or unwilling, they were of necessity forced into action. The approach of the Allied armies to the Rhine, the passage of that river, and successful invasion of the eastern departments, the establishment of Wellington in the southern states of France, both roused into activity the dormant flame of loyalty in the provinces, and loudly called for the appearance of one or more princes of the royal blood on the

soil of the monarchy, to combine the scattered efforts of its adherents, and assert the pretensions of the exiled family to the throne. Moreau had been looked to by them as a second Pichegru; proclamations were prepared to be addressed by him to Napoleon's soldiers: his death was regarded at Hartwell as the greatest calamity which had been sustained by the legitimist cause since the execution of Louis XVI. At the moment when the Allied armies crossed the Rhine, Louis XVIII. addressed a proclamation to the Senate, calling on them to co-operate with him in overturning the tyranny of Napoleon; and circulated widely a secret address among all persons in authority whose dispositions were thought to be favourable—a letter in which, like a man who knew the character of the persons with whom he had to deal, he spoke little of honour or loyalty, but much of titles, dignities, and offices to be preserved, and injuries forgotten.[1] *

[1] Beauch. i. 40, 49. Cap. i. 249, 252.

70. And departure of the Bourbon princes for its shore.

Application was at the same time made to the British government, for the Bourbon princes to be permitted to join the different armies on the French territory; and the cabinet of St James's, after much deliberation, proceeding from a desire to do nothing which might indicate a disposition to coerce the wishes of the French people in the choice of their government, granted them permission to go, but as simple volunteers only. The current of events, however, ran too strongly to be arrested by

* "The King, availing himself of every opportunity of making known to his subjects the sentiments with which he is animated, has charged me to give, in his name, to ——— all the assurances which he can desire. His Majesty is well aware how much ——— has in his power, not only as regards endeavouring to shake off the yoke which oppresses him, but in seconding one day, by his intelligence, the authority destined to repair such a multitude of evils. The promises of the King are nothing but the consequences of the engagements he has undertaken in the face of Europe, which are — to forget the errors of his subjects, to recompense services, stifle resentments, legitimatise rank, consolidate fortunes; to bring about, in short, nothing but an easy transition from present calamities and alarms, to future tranquillity and happiness."— Le Comte Blacas. Hartwell, 1st December 1813.—See Capefigue, *Hist. de la Restauration*, i. 250.

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these prudential measures, how judicious soever they may have been. The princes set out under this permission, restricted as it was. The Comte d'Artois left Holyrood-

Feb. 2.

house, and landed at Rotterdam on the 2d of February; from whence he proceeded towards the headquarters of the Allied armies, by Bâle, Vesoul, and Langres; the Duc d'Angoulême embarked for Spain, to join Wellington in the south of France, to be in readiness to take advantage of any Royalist movements that might occur in that quarter; while the Duc de Berri set sail for Jersey, to be at hand, in case of the outbreak of a Royalist insurrection, which was thought to be in preparation in Brittany and la Vendée.[1]

[1] Cap. Hist. de la Rest. i. 249, 253, Beauch. i. 40-54.

71. Interview of the Royalist leaders at Troyes with Alexander.

It was at this critical moment that the Allied monarchs entered Troyes, and for the first time were brought in contact with the Royalists of France. In common with all its other provinces, the few remaining adherents of the ancient regime had received a great impulse in that city, which was the residence of the principal Royalist families of the east of France, from the rapid progress of the Allied arms. The retreat of Napoleon towards Paris after the disastrous battle of la Rothière, seemed certainly to presage his approaching fall. Several gentlemen attached to the old family having resolved to commence the movement, assumed the white cockade after the Allies entered Troyes, and earnestly solicited an interview with the Emperor Alexander, which was at

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length granted. The Marquis of Widranges and M. Goualt were the persons who spoke on the occasion: they had suspended on their breasts the cross of St Louis and wore the white cockade, the wearing of which was forbidden in the empire under pain of death. "We entreat your Majesty," said they, "in the name of all the respectable inhabitants of Troyes, to accept with favour the wish which we form for the re-establishment of the royal house of Bourbon on the throne of France." "Gentlemen," replied Alexander, "I receive you with pleasure; I wish well to your cause,

but I fear your proceedings are rather premature. The chances of war are uncertain, and I should be grieved to see brave men like you compromised or sacrificed. We do not come ourselves to give a king to France; we desire to know its wishes, and to leave it to declare itself." "But it will never declare itself as long as it is under the knife," replied the Marquis; "never as long as Buonaparte shall be in authority in France will Europe be tranquil." "It is for that very reason," replied the Czar, "that the first thing we must think of is to beat him—to beat him—to beat him." Alexander's humane prudence would appear to have been inspired by the spirit of foresight on this occasion; for the day on which this conversation occurred at Troyes was the very one which was marked by the catastrophe at Champaubert. The Marquis Widranges, disappointed in his hopes of obtaining a declaration in favour of the Bourbons from the Allied sovereigns, went on to Bâle, where he joined the Comte d'Artois, while M. Goualt, unhappily for himself, remained at Troyes. At the same time a person styling himself St Vincent, but who in reality was the Marquis de Vitrolles, one of the most devoted adherents of the ancient dynasty, arrived at the Allied headquarters, bearing credentials, setting forth that he was entirely worthy of confidence, from persons high in authority in Paris, and entreating the monarchs to advance rapidly to the capital. But the issue was still too doubtful in the theatre of arms, and the divisions of the diplomatists too wide in the cabinet, to permit of any decided step being yet taken by the Allied sovereigns in favour of the Royalist party.[1]

[1] Cap. i. 255, 259. Dan. 78. Beauch. i. 240, 246. Koch, i. 205.

72. Operations of the Allied Grand Army on the Seine.

While the cause of the Restoration in France was thus rather adjourned than damped, by the prudent ambiguity of the monarchs at Troyes, operations of a tardy and indecisive character, but still attended with important effects, had taken place on the part of the Grand Army, on the banks of the Seine. Instead of pushing military

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operations with vigour, and following closely the army of Napoleon down the Seine, Schwartzenberg, acting under the directions of his cabinet, which was desirous above all things to gain time, and avoid precipitating matters against Napoleon till the throne was at all events secured for his descendants, put the main body of his army into cantonments, contenting himself with sending forward the corps of Wittgenstein and Wrede to follow on the traces of the retreating French. From Troyes to Paris, one road goes by Sens, Montargis, Nemours, and Fontainebleau, by the left bank of the Seine the whole way. But Napoleon having retired by the right bank, or eastern side of that river, it was necessary for the pursuing army, if it proposed to maintain its wings abreast on both banks, and keep on the trace of the retreating army, to force the passage of the Seine at Nogent, Bray, or Montereau, the only points below Troyes on the road towards Paris where there are stone bridges capable of affording a secure passage to artillery. All these bridges were in possession of the French, and strongly guarded; Oudinot and Victor lay on the opposite bank, after the departure of Napoleon, with twenty-two thousand men;—a body which was, however, fast being increased by conscripts hurried up from Paris. But such was the superiority of the Allied forces, that these inconsiderable bodies of men could not have stood a day before them, if they had pressed on in good earnest for the French capital.[1]

[1] Dan. 94, 95. Koch, i. 279, 282. Burgh. 123, 124. Jom. iv. 538, 539. Plotho, iii. 213, 214.

73. Advance of the Allies to Montereau. Feb. 11.

At length, having allowed his troops to repose four days around Troyes, to the infinite annoyance of Alexander, who burned with anxiety to push the war with vigour, Schwartzenberg on the 11th gathered up his gigantic array, and put his columns in motion to follow up the enemy. The Prince of Würtemberg took Sens by assault after a sharp conflict; and on the same day General Hardegg, with the vanguard of Wrede's corps, attacked the rear of the enemy near Romilly, and drove

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them into Nogent, which was stormed, after a most gallant resistance by General Bourmont, and evacuated next day, after the bridge over the Seine had been destroyed. The prisoners made in these conflicts having given the important information that Napoleon, with the main body of his forces, had diverged towards Sézanne, in the direction of Blucher's army, and that an inconsiderable cordon of troops alone remained in his front, Schwartzenberg resolved to act with more vigour. He accordingly, next day, crossed the corps of Wrede and Wittgenstein over the Seine at Bray and Pont-sur-Seine, and moved them upon Donnemarie and Provins; whilst those of the Prince-Royal of Würtemberg and General Bianchi (who had succeeded Prince Colloredo in the command of his corps, the prince having been disabled by a wound on the 6th) advanced from Sens to Montereau, where the former crossed over, while the latter moved down its left bank towards Moret. The establishment of these powerful corps in that quarter, where there was no force of any magnitude to oppose them, led to the most important results, and showed how speedily the war, at this period, might have been terminated by a vigorous and concerted movement of the whole Allied forces.[1]

Feb. 12.

Feb. 13.

[1] Beauch. i. 294, 300. Burgh. 138. Dan. 134, 135. Koch, i. 286, 289. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 331, 333.

Moret was occupied next day: Nemours was taken by Platoff, with a whole battalion: Seslavin, with his light horse, made himself master of Montargis, and pushed on his advanced posts to the gates of Orleans. The palace and forest of Fontainebleau fell into the hands of the Cossacks: Auxerre was carried by assault, and its garrison, which endeavoured to cut its way through the attacking force, put to the sword. The whole plain between the Seine and the Loire was inundated with the enemy's light troops, which already showed themselves beyond Fontainebleau on the road to the capital. Montereau was strongly occupied by the Austrians, while Schwartzenberg's headquarters were advanced to Nogent, between which and Bray the immense reserves of the

74. And Fontainebleau and Brie. Feb. 14 and 15.

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Allied Grand Army were placed. Paris was in consternation: already the reserve parks and heavy baggage of Victor had reached Charenton, within a few miles of its gates; the peasants of the plain of Brie, flying to the capital, reported that uncouth hordes with long beards, armed with lances, cut down trees on the sides of the highways, and roasted oxen and sheep whole, over fires kindled with their wood, which they devoured half raw. Meanwhile fame, magnifying the approaching danger, already announced that two hundred thousand Tartars and Calmucks were approaching to sack and lay waste the metropolis of science and the arts.[1]

[1] Koch, i. 286, 291. Beauch. i. 294, 303. Burgh. 138, 139. Dan. 134, 135. Voldern-dorff, iv. 8, § 121.

75. Junction of the army of Napoleon with Victor and Oudinot. Feb. 16.

Such was the alarming state of affairs to the south of the capital, when Napoleon, at the head of his indefatigable Guards and cuirassiers, came across to the valley of the Seine, by Guignes, through the forest of Brie. The advanced guard of this array found the roads covered with waggons converging from all quarters towards the capital, filled with the trembling inhabitants, who were flying before the Cossacks. Instantly the living loads were disburdened; the waggons filled with the soldiers, or laid aside, and their horses harnessed to the guns; and every horse and man that could be pressed from the adjacent villages attached to the vehicles to hurry them forward. It was full time. The plain of Brie was covered with fire and smoke; the retiring columns under Victor and Oudinot, severely pressed by the enemy, were straining every nerve to preserve the cross-road to Chalons, by which Napoleon had promised to arrive. But so great was the superiority of the enemy, that it was doubtful whether they could maintain their ground for another hour, in which event, the junction of the two armies would have been rendered impossible. No sooner, however, were the well-known standards of the cuirassiers seen, than cries of *Vive l'Empereur!* ran, like an electric shock, along the line; the retreat was stopped at

all points; already the retiring columns were preparing to turn on their pursuers: while the Allies, sensible, from the change, of the presence of Napoleon, instantly became as cautious and circumspect as they had recently before been confident and audacious. Wearied with their unexampled exertions, the troops were halted where they had thus checked the advance of the enemy; soon the soldiers sank to sleep on the very ground where they stood, and the headquarters of the Emperor were established in the village of Guignes, where he passed the night.[1]

[1] Fain, 102, 103. Dan. 148. Lab. ii. 217, 218. Koch, i. 300, 305.

76. Advance of Napoleon, and combat of Nangis. Feb. 17.

In the course of the night, and early on the following morning, large reinforcements joined the French headquarters from the army of Spain. The arrival of these bronzed veterans, upon whose steadiness perfect reliance could be placed, and the successive coming up of the corps which had inflicted such wounds on the army of Silesia, enabled the Emperor, on the following morning, to resume the offensive at the head of fifty-five thousand men. Orders were given to the troops to collect bread for three days' march; the knowledge that they were about to attack the enemy under the direction of Napoleon, coupled with their marvellous successes over the army of Silesia, had restored all their wonted enthusiasm to the soldiers. They marched as to assured victory. By daybreak the forward movement commenced at all points. Oudinot, supported by Kellermann's dragoons, pressed on the retiring columns of Wittgenstein, in the direction of Nogent; Macdonald pushed the Bavarians with the utmost vigour back on Bray, by Donnemarie; while Victor was despatched by Villeneuve le Comte towards Montereau, with orders to make himself master of its important bridge over the Seine that very night. Count Pahlen, who was at Mormant with Wittgenstein's advanced guard, consisting of three thousand infantry and eighteen hundred horse, was now in a most hazardous situation;[2] for he was well aware he would be the first victim of the

[2] Dan. 150, 151. Koch, i. 310, 313. Lab. i. 218, 219. Fain, 104. Vaud. i. 377, 379. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 329, 331. Plotho, iii. 211.

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French Emperor's furious attack, and yet his orders were to remain where he was, as the arrival of Napoleon on the Seine had never been contemplated. In this extremity he remained all night under arms, resolved to resist to the last extremity. Shortly after daybreak the tempest was upon him, and he began slowly, and in the best order, to retreat towards Nangis, the infantry in squares, with the horse and some weak regiments of Cossacks and a few guns to protect the flanks and rear.

77. Defeat of Pahlen.

For two hours the retreat was conducted with perfect regularity, notwithstanding the incessant fire of the French horse-artillery, and attacks of their cavalry; but at length the assaults became more frequent, and the veteran cuirassiers under Milhaud, who had just come up from Spain, burning with desire to restore the lustre of their arms, charged on three sides at once with such vehemence, that the cavalry were entirely routed, the guns taken, and the infantry broken. The defeat was now irretrievable. So complete was the disorder that Wittgenstein himself, who came up with reinforcements, was swept away by the torrent, and narrowly escaped being made prisoner. Eleven guns and forty caissons were captured, and two thousand one hundred men made prisoners, besides nine hundred who fell on the field of battle. So complete was the destruction of some of the Russian regiments, that that of Silenguinsk alone, which was not broken till after it had gallantly repulsed repeated charges of cavalry, lost one thousand three hundred and fifty-nine men; and it, with that of Revel, which suffered nearly as much, ceased to exist, and were marked in the muster-rolls as "sent to Plotsk to be recruited." Yet, though deeply affected by such a chasm in his devoted followers, Alexander retained no rancour towards Pahlen; and seeing him, for the first time after the combat, at the barriers of Paris, said to him—"You think I am angry with you; but I know you were not in fault."[1] The field of battle presented a striking proof of the profound

[1] Vaud. i. 377, 379. Koch, i. 311, 313. Lab. i. 218, 219. Dan. 152, 153. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 330, 331.

and wide-spread excitement which this terrible contest had awakened throughout the world; for it showed the bodies of the hardy steeds of Tartary, and the fiery coursers of Andalusia, which had fallen in combat under the walls of Paris. It seemed to realise, after the lapse of a thousand years, that fabled conflict of the Saracens and Christians around that capital, in the time of Charlemagne, to which the genius of Ariosto has given immortality.

78. Pursuit of the Bavarians to the bridge of Montereau. Feb. 17.

While this bloody combat was occurring under the eye of Napoleon on the left, the Bavarians in the centre rapidly retreated from their position at Villeneuve le Comte and Donnemarie; and such was the fatigue of the cavalry of the Imperial Guard, who were intrusted with their pursuit, that they were unable to follow them. Macdonald, however, pressed vigorously on Hardegg's division, as it fell back, and took many prisoners and a large quantity of baggage. Victor, moving upon Montereau, came upon a Bavarian division posted on the heights of Valjouan. They were immediately attacked in the most vigorous manner in front by General Gerard, and in rear by Bordesoult, and soon broken. Nothing but the failure of General l'Héritier, who neglected to charge the fugitives, as he might have done, when first thrown into disorder, preserved the Bavarian division from total ruin: as it was, they only made their escape in the greatest disorder, and after sustaining a very considerable loss. Such, however, was the exhaustion of Victor's troops, from the excessive fatigue which they had lately undergone, that he was unable to follow out his directions, by making himself master of the town and bridge of Montereau; in consequence of which, the Bavarians, who had rallied under the protection of some squadrons of Schwartzenberg's hulans, effected their retreat across the Seine, though weakened by the loss of two thousand five hundred men.[1] The enemy occupied in force the town of MONTEREAU, and the castle of Surville, which commanded

1 Vaud. i. 315, 318. Koch, i. 315, 3 8. Plotho, iii. 212, 214. Burgh. 141, 142. Volderndorff, iv. 8, 121.

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the bridge. Their troops consisted of two Austrian divisions under Bianchi, and the Würtembergers—in all about eighteen thousand men.

79. The Allies propose an armistice.

When Schwartzenberg was made acquainted, which he was on the evening of the 17th, with these disasters which had befallen the two corps of Wittgenstein and Wrede, which had been pushed across the Seine, he immediately summoned a council of war, which was attended by the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia. It was evident to all that the misfortunes had been owing to the separation of the army of Silesia from the Grand Army; it was resolved, therefore, as soon as possible, to reunite them in the direction of Troyes, and give battle in front of that town. For this purpose, orders were given to fall back at all points; while Blucher was directed, as soon as his troops were in a condition to resume offensive operations, to incline to his left, so as to facilitate the proposed junction. At the same period, principally to gain time, a flag of truce was despatched from the Allied headquarters to Napoleon, to say that they were surprised at the offensive movement made by the French army, as they had agreed to the terms of peace proposed by Caulaincourt at Chatillon, and had given orders to their plenipotentiaries to sign the preliminaries accordingly, and they proposed in consequence an immediate suspension of hostilities.[1]

[1] Burgh. 143. Dan. 154. Koch, i. 319. Fain, 105.

80. Napoleon rises in his demands at the Congress, and tries to negotiate separately with Austria.

Colonel Par, who bore the flag of truce from the Allied headquarters, arrived at those of Napoleon late on the night of the 17th. The circumstance of the Allies proposing terms of accommodation after these defeats, coupled with the fact of a letter having been written by the Empress Marie Louise to her father, determined Napoleon to seize the opportunity of opening a communication directly with the Emperor Francis. The Council of State, which had assembled at Paris to deliberate on the terms offered at Chatillon, to be immediately considered, had been, with the exception of one member, unanimously of

opinion that they should be accepted. Napoleon, however, had always determined in his own mind to make the negotiation entirely dependent on the progress of military events; and he, accordingly, gave the strongest injunctions to Caulaincourt, however near he might come to the point, to avoid committing himself to any treaty without his special authority. The successes at Champaubert, Montmirail, and Vauchamps had entirely confirmed him in these ideas; and the very night the first advantage was gained, as already mentioned, he had written to Caulaincourt to try and gain time, and, above all things, to "*sign nothing.*" His recent successes still further elevated his hopes, and he addressed a letter from Nangis to the Emperor of Austria on the same night, stating that he was extremely anxious to enter into a negotiation; but that, after the brilliant victories he had gained, he now looked for more favourable terms than had been proposed at Chatillon. At the same time he wrote to Caulaincourt, that the *carte blanche* he had formerly received was merely to save Paris, which appeared to be endangered after the battle of la Rothière; but that great successes had since been gained; that the necessity no longer existed; and, in consequence, his extraordinary powers were *recalled*, and henceforth the negotiation was to pursue its ordinary course. Having done this, he resolved to delay for some days closing with the Allied advances towards an armistice, and to follow up with the utmost vigour the tide of success which was now setting in in his favour.[1]

[1] Fain, 94, 105, 106. Burgh. 144. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 333, 334.

81. Description of Montereau.

Situated twenty leagues to the south of Paris, at the confluence of the Seine and the Yonne, the town of Montereau presents one of the most agreeable objects in France to the gaze of the traveller. The part which lies on the left bank of the Yonne, which is the most considerable, is joined to the right bank by a bridge of stone. Another bridge, famous for having been the scene of the murder of the Duke of Burgundy in 1419, unites the

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opposite banks of the Seine. These two rivers, which unite at Montereau, with the numerous barks which carry on their active navigation, give the town a gay and joyous aspect, which is increased by the smiling appearance of the vineyards and meadows adjoining it on the south and east, and the country-houses and villas glittering around it in the sun. The traveller who approaches from the side of Paris involuntarily halts on the summit of the heights of Surville, which overhang the town on the northern bank, to gaze on the lovely scene which lies spread out like a map beneath his feet: he would do well to remember that there, beside the little cross adjacent to the chateau, stood Napoleon during one of the LAST of his many victories. On the evening of the 18th, the French troops assembled in imposing masses on these heights, which completely commanded the bridges and town beneath; the artillery of the Guard was placed on either side of the road near the cross; and the Emperor took his station in person amidst the guns, to direct their fire, for the enemy still held the town. They had strongly barricaded the bridges, and everything presaged a bloody conflict.[1]

[1] Personal observation. Beauch. i. 304, 305. Cap. Hist. del'Empire, x. 390, 391. Koch, i. 320, 321. Plotho, iii. 214. Die. Grosse Chron. ii. 334, 336.

82. Battle of Montereau. Feb. 18.

It was not, however, till late in the day, and after a severe conflict, that these important heights fell into the hands of the French troops. Bianchi, fully sensible of their importance, had during the night occupied them in force with the troops of Würtemberg, strongly supported by artillery; and Victor, who in the morning commenced the attack on the position, was repulsed, and his son-in-law, the brave General Chateau, killed, when in person leading on the grenadiers to the assault. Gerard was upon this directed to supersede Victor in the command of his corps, and immediately advanced to the attack. Undismayed by the fire of forty pieces of artillery, which the German batteries poured upon him from the heights of Surville, he bravely and repeatedly led his troops almost to the very mouth of the guns. But it was in

vain: the undaunted cannoneers made good the post assigned to them; noon was far past, and evening at that inclement season was fast approaching, while still the heights were in the hands of the enemy. Then Napoleon came up with the artillery and cavalry of the Guard, at the gallop, and, desirous of profiting by the few hours of daylight which still remained, he instantly brought forward forty pieces of the reserve artillery, and disposed his redoubtable Old Guard and cuirassiers to aid the renewed attack of Gerard with all their forces. Thirty thousand men, supported by sixty pieces of cannon, now marched fiercely forward, under the very eye of the Emperor, amidst cries of *Vive l'Empereur!* Despairing of maintaining his post, which was only defended by twelve thousand combatants, against such an accumulation of forces, the Prince of Würtemberg drew off his men towards the bridge in his rear; at first in good order, and presenting an undaunted front to the imperial cavalry, which now thundered in close pursuit. But by degrees, as they descended the southern and steeper face of the heights towards the bridges, and got entangled in the hollow way through which the road passes to them, they fell into confusion; and infantry, cavalry, and artillery, breaking their array, rushed headlong to the only issue by which they could hope for escape from the bloody sabres of the cuirassiers.[1]

[1] Koch, i. 321, 324. Beauch. i. 314, 316. Plotho, iii. 216, 217. Burgh. 145. Claus. viii. 306. Plotho, iii. 215. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 340.

83. Defeat of the Allies, who are driven beyond the Seine.

The Prince-Royal of Würtemberg, however, at this dreadful moment exerted himself with equal skill and resolution to stem the torrent. He was at one time nearly enveloped by the French cavalry on the bridge, fighting with his own hand, to gain time for the troops to cross over; and by the vigour which he displayed, and the noble example which he set, he succeeded in enabling the greater part of them to get in safety to the other side, where they were received by Bianchi with his hitherto untouched Austrian divisions. Meanwhile Napoleon had established himself with the artillery of

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the Guard on the now abandoned heights of Surville, and soon sixty pieces of cannon opened a close and concentric discharge on the dense masses which were crowding over the bridge. Such was the eagerness of the Emperor, that he resumed, after twenty years' cessation, his old occupation as a gunner; and, as at the siege of Toulon in 1793, himself levelled and pointed a cannon. Meanwhile the Austrian batteries below, on the opposite bank, replied with vigour to the fire of the French pieces; and the old cannoneers of the Imperial Guard, hearing the whistle of the balls above their heads, besought the Emperor to retire from the front, to a situation of less danger. "Courage, my friends!" he replied; "the bullet which is to kill me is not yet cast." Protected by the fire of such a powerful artillery on the heights above them, the mere discharges of which shivered the windows of the neighbouring chateau of Surville to pieces, the French chasseurs pressed so rapidly on the last columns of the Würtembergers, that there was no time to fire the mines for destroying the bridge; the pursuing horsemen crossed over pell-mell with the fugitives, the division of Duhesme rapidly passed after them, and, amidst the shouts of the inhabitants, drove the enemy entirely out of Montereau; the Allies retiring after having destroyed the bridge over the Yonne, which stopped the pursuit, in the direction of Sens.[1]

[1] Burgh. 146. Fain, 107, 108. Plotho, iii. 216. Koch, i. 323, 324. Beauch. i. 315, 317. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 339, 340. Voldern-dorf, iv. 127.

84. Results of the battle, and general retreat of the grand Allied army.

This bloody combat, which was one of the most obstinately contested of the campaign, and inferior to few ever directed by Napoleon in brilliancy and valour, cost the French three thousand men killed and wounded, principally in consequence of the destructive fire of grape, so long kept up by the Würtemberg artillery from the heights of Surville. But the loss of the enemy was as great in killed and wounded, and they had to lament in addition above two thousand prisoners, six guns, and four standards. "My heart is relieved," said Napoleon, on beholding the flight of the Allies across the bridge: "I

have saved the capital of my empire." Great indeed was the moral effect of these repeated successes of the Emperor, both upon his own and the Allied armies. It restored the *prestige* of his name, the magic of his renown, which the long-continued disasters in Russia and Germany had sensibly dimmed. The young conscripts deemed themselves invincible under his direction ; the veterans recommenced the stories of Austerlitz and Jena. Confounded by such a succession of disasters as had befallen their arms in so many different quarters, within so short a period, the Allied generals began seriously to fear that the star of Napoleon was again in the ascendant, and to resume, in the Austrian councils at least, their former dread of his arms. Orders were immediately issued to the whole army to retreat to a concentrated position in front of Troyes, where it was proposed to join Blucher and give battle ; the Seine was repassed at all points ; Fontainebleau, Nemours, and Montargis were evacuated ; and the Allied host, retiring before the enemy, was soon assembled, still above a hundred thousand strong, between Nogent, Bray, and Troyes.[1]

[1] Moniteur, Feb. 21, 1814. Fain, 107, 108. Burgh. 146, 147. Dan. 157. Koch, i. 326, 327. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 342, 343.

85. Discontent of the Emperor Napoleon at his generals.

Wonderful as these successes were, they by no means came up to the expectations of the Emperor. His discontent was visible ; his disappointment broke out on all occasions, and he was in an especial manner misled in his ideas of what might have been effected, by the achievements of the troops who fought under his own eyes. When in presence of Napoleon, no fatigues could exhaust, no dangers appall, no difficulties impede them ; they made, without murmuring, almost superhuman exertions. But they were by no means either equally confident, or equally energetic, under the direction of his lieutenants ; and not unfrequently sank under the exhaustion consequent on the unparalleled activity by which he was now striving to make genius supply the want of numbers. He could not be brought, however, to comprehend this difference. He constantly expected the troops to achieve, under all cir-

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cumstances, as much as he saw they did when animated by his own presence; and never failed to ascribe to the weakness or indecision of the officers in command, the failure of any enterprise on which he had calculated as likely to produce brilliant results, which had, in fact, been owing to the want of the animating *prestige* of his name. His affairs were now so critical, that he could not afford to gain only half success; nothing short of continued victory could extricate him from the host of enemies by whom he was encircled; and he was well aware that even an inconsiderable failure in any serious combat might be attended by the most calamitous results. A sense of this both inflamed his expectations and increased his violence; the most vehement ebullitions of wrath frequently took place against officers at the head of their troops; and even his oldest and most esteemed marshals were rendered the victims of a disappointment, which was entirely owing to his expecting from them more than it was in the power of human strength to achieve.[1]

[1] Fain, 108, 109. Koch, i. 315.

86. Disgrace of Victor.

Victor was the first victim of these unbounded expectations and irritable moods of the Emperor. That marshal, as already noticed, had been ordered to push on to Montereau on the evening of the 17th, and doubtless great results might have been expected from the seizure of that important post and bridge over the Seine, at a time when two corps of the Allies, receding before Napoleon's columns, were still on the right bank of the river. In truth, however, Victor's men were so completely worn out with fatigue, that they were unequal to the task of carrying the position on the night when they arrived before it. But such was the Emperor's wrath at the attack not having been made, that he deprived Victor of the command of his corps, which he conferred on Gerard. Next evening, after the combat at Montereau was over, the unhappy marshal presented himself before Napoleon to reclaim against his dismissal. He was received, however, with such a storm of invective, directed not only

against himself, but against the duchess his wife, whom Napoleon accused of keeping aloof from the Empress, and leaguing with the enemies of the court, that it was only by recalling to his recollection the Italian campaigns, where they had begun the career of arms together, that Victor succeeded so far in appeasing his wrath as to obtain in lieu of his corps, which had been conferred upon Gerard, the command of two divisions of the Guard.[1] *

[1] Fain, 109. Moniteur, Feb. 20, 1814.

Nor were inferior officers spared by the wrath which thus prostrated the marshals of the empire. L'Héritier was publicly reproached for having failed to charge at the decisive moment of the combat of Nangis; Guyot for having allowed some pieces of the artillery of the Guard to be surprised in bivouac the night before; General Dejean, one of the most distinguished officers of artillery, for having permitted the cannon ammunition to run short in the hottest of the fire at the heights of Surville; even the heroic Montbrun suffered the most cutting taunts for having, without resistance, abandoned the ridges and forest of Fontainebleau to the Cossacks. There can be no doubt that part of these reproaches were, in some degree, well founded, though others were altogether unjust. But the necessity of making any of them public at this critical

87. And of Dejean, L'Héritier, and Montbrun.

* "At the conclusion of the conference, in which he had made no impression on the Emperor, Victor said that, if he had committed a military fault, he had expiated it dearly by the stroke which had cut off his son-in-law, General Chateau. At the name Napoleon evinced the warmest emotion; he heard only the grief of the marshal, and strongly sympathised with it. Victor, then resuming confidence, protested anew that he would not leave the army. 'I will shoulder a musket,' said he; 'Victor has not forgotten his old occupation: I will take my place in the Guard.' These words at length disarmed the Emperor. 'Well, Victor,' said he, stretching out his hand, 'remain with us. I cannot restore to you your corps, which I have bestowed on Gerard; but I give you two divisions of the Guard: go now, take the command of them, and let there be no separation betwixt us.' . . Yet he was so far imbued with his feelings of resentment, that in the bulletin dated that day, giving an account of the combat of Montereau, he said, 'General Chateau will die: but he will die at least accompanied by the regrets of the whole army—a fate far preferable to that of a soldier who has only purchased the prolongation of his existence by surviving his reputation, and extinguishing the sentiments which French honour inspires in the circumstances in which we are placed.'"—Fain, *Campagne de* 1814, 111-113; and *Moniteur*, 20*th Feb.* 1814.

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juncture was not equally apparent; and it was evident to all, both that the Emperor's fatigue and anxiety had fearfully augmented the natural violence of his temper, and that the necessities of his situation had made him expect and calculate on achievements, both from his officers and soldiers, which it was beyond human strength to effect.[1]

[1] Fain, 109, 110. Moniteur, Feb. 20, 1814.

88. Napoleon's steps for following up his successes.

The day after the battle, Napoleon remained at Surville, while his advanced guards in all directions followed the Allied Grand Army up the valley of the Seine, towards Sens, Bray, and Nogent. Conceiving that Schwartzenberg's retreat was now decidedly pronounced, and being well aware of the nervousness of the Austrian generals about their lines of communication, he at the same time wrote to Marshal Augereau to resume the offensive at Lyons, and threaten the rear of the Grand Army from the side of Mâcon. That marshal's force, which originally, as already mentioned, consisted of twelve thousand men, had been considerably augmented by two divisions of iron veterans, drawn from Suchet's army in Catalonia, and the levies in Dauphiny and Savoy, which were commanded by Generals Marchand and Serras. These reinforcements had enabled him to assume so threatening an attitude at Lyons, that General Bubna, who commanded the extreme Austrian left in that quarter, which did not muster above fifteen thousand sabres and bayonets, had been under the necessity of evacuating the valley of the Rhone below the Jura, and concentrating his forces in the neighbourhood of Geneva. The communication over Mont Cenis with the Viceroy's army in the Italian plains had been re-established, and the course of the Saone to Mâcon was entirely cleared of the enemy. Napoleon therefore indulged sanguine hopes, and not without reason, that he would be able, by means of this auxiliary force, so to straiten the rear, and cut up the communications of the Grand Army, that their further stay in France would be rendered impossible.[2] Already he dreamed of fresh con-

[2] Fain, 113, 115. Lab. ii. 224, 225. Vaud. i. 391, 395. Plotho, iii. 220, 221. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 346, 347.

quests beyond the Rhine; and in his exultation more than once said—"I am nearer Munich than the Allies are to Paris."

89. Advance of the Crown Prince of Sweden to the Rhine.

But while Napoleon was, not altogether without reason, calculating upon these vast results from his successes, and looking to the incursions of his lieutenants to threaten the flanks and communications of the weightiest of his opponents, his own rear was menaced, and a new enemy was descending from the north, who in the end came to tell with decisive effect upon the fortunes of the campaign. Notwithstanding the reluctance of Bernadotte to prosecute in person the invasion, and the long time which he had consumed in the separate contest with Denmark in the south of Jutland, the time had now arrived when it was no longer possible for him to avoid appearing, if not in person, at least by means of his generals, on the great theatre of action. The most urgent requisition had been made to him by the Emperor Alexander, to bring his forces into action; and as the peace with Denmark, and the blockade of Davoust in Hamburg by Benningsen's powerful army of reserve, forty-five thousand strong, which had been directed thither after the battle of Leipsic, left him no longer an excuse, he was obliged, however reluctant, to advance towards the Rhine. On the 10th of February he arrived at Cologne, from whence, two days afterwards, he published a proclamation to the French people, in which he vindicated his invasion of his native country, by the anxious desire which he felt that it should no longer continue, as it had been, the scourge of the earth; and on the ground of the solemn assurance which, he declared, he had received from the Allied sovereigns, that they made war on France only to secure the independence of other states. Meanwhile Bulow, who commanded his advanced guard, had hitherto been unable to make any impression on Antwerp, even though aided by Sir Thomas Graham and eight thousand English troops.[1] But he had been more successful at Bois-le-Duc,

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[1] Lab. ii. 106, 108. Dan. 121, 122. Koch, i. 275. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 265, 270. Plotho, iii. 197. Valentin, ii. 97.

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which was delivered up to him, with a hundred and fifty heavy cannon on its ramparts, by the inhabitants of the place. And Winzingerode having received considerable reinforcements at Namur, the siege of Antwerp was converted into a blockade; Bulow united the best part of his forces to those of the Russian commander, and both together took the road by Avesnes for Laon.

90. Advance of Winzingerode to Laon, and description of Soissons. Feb. 10.

To reach the latter town, it was indispensable, in the first instance, to gain possession of the former, as it covered the road by which Laon was to be approached. But Chernicheff, with the Russian advanced guard, appeared before Avesnes at daybreak on the 9th February, and it surrendered without resistance, with its weak garrison of two hundred men. By this capture four hundred English and Spanish prisoners, taken during the Peninsular war, were set at liberty. Napoleon had never expected that the Allies would have entered France on this side, and the frontier fortresses were wholly unprovided with the means of making any resistance. Rheims opened its gates the very next day; and the whole country between the Sarre and the Meuse, in the rear, disgusted with the intolerable exactions of the French armies, received the Allies with open arms. But these easy successes led to another of a more difficult and important character. Soissons, commanding as it does the only bridge in that quarter over the Aisne, and lying on the great *chaussée* from Laon to Paris, as well as several other roads which intersect each other in its centre, is a fortress which, in a strategetical point of view, is of the very highest importance. It is an old town, adorned by a massy Gothic church, and surrounded by antiquated walls, which, however, had been armed and repaired, and put in a respectable posture of defence. Green and level meadows immediately adjoin it on all sides; but they are confined to the vicinity of the river; and at the distance of half a mile on either side, the road ascends the slopes of the more elevated plateau, on the summit of which it gene-

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rally runs, and from the brows of which, plunging shot may be sent by artillery into the town beneath, to which the cannon on its ramparts, pointed upwards, were little calculated to make an effectual reply. Notwithstanding this disadvantage, however, the capture of the place was not likely to be an easy enterprise, as Napoleon, sensible of its importance, had intrusted its defence to the brave General Rusca, one of his old companions in arms in the Italian campaigns, who had under his command the depot of six regiments of the line, a thousand National Guards, and a hundred gendarmes; in all about four thousand five hundred men.[1]

[1] Personal observation. Dan. 124, 125. Koch, i. 276, 277. Lab. ii. 208, 209. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 281, 282.

91. Preparations for the storming of Soissons.

Braving the resistance which might be expected from so determined a character as General Rusca, at the head of so respectable a force, General Chernicheff offered to carry it by a *coup-de-main*, and for this purpose only demanded the advanced guard, consisting of four thousand five hundred men, with eighteen pieces of cannon. Though by no means sanguine of success, Winzingerode permitted the attempt to be made, throwing on Chernicheff the whole responsibility in case of failure—the usual resource of weak men who have to act with resolute ones. Chernicheff accordingly set out with his small but gallant band, and on the descent of the plateau from the side of Laon towards the valley of the Aisne, fell in with the French advanced guard, two thousand strong, consisting chiefly of National Guards, which was speedily put to the rout, and driven down the slope across the meadows into Soissons, with the loss of five hundred men. The Russians advanced, after this success, to within cannon-shot of the place, but purposely delayed the attack till next day, in order to throw the enemy off their guard, by leading them to suppose that there were nothing but Cossacks and light troops, incapable of attempting an assault, before the place. Early on the following morning, preparations for storming were made, and Chernicheff resolved to direct his principal attack against the *tête-de-*

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*pont*, and from thence force his way into the town. The infantry was directed to advance by the highway from Laon, while a detachment of light troops was despatched to take possession of a public-house, about ninety yards from the walls, to the right of the great road; and the Cossack regiments, each preceded by six pieces of artillery, advanced in a semicircle towards the walls, so as to distract the enemy as to the real point where an attack was to be made.[1]

Feb. 13. [1] Koch, i. 277. Vaud. ii. 24, 26. Dan. 127, 428. Richter, iii. 179. Die Grosse Chron. Plotho, iii. 203.

92. Chernicheff carries it by a *coup-de-main*.

These dispositions, executed with remarkable precision, proved entirely successful. The light infantry speedily made themselves masters of the public-house, and from its roof and windows kept up such a fire on the bridge-head, that it was abandoned, and the columns of infantry, advancing rapidly in pursuit, attempted to carry the gate, but were repulsed with loss. While re-forming his men for a second assault, signs of sudden disorder were observed on the rampart; and the Russians, though as yet ignorant of the cause, immediately took advantage of it to bring two petards up to the gates, which blew them partially off their hinges, and the light infantry, quickly running up, completed their destruction. The whole body of the assailants then rushed in, and pushed on with such vigour, that very little further resistance was attempted; three battalions succeeded in making their escape by the gates, on the opposite side towards Compiègne, which were not invested; but fourteen guns and three thousand six hundred men fell into the hands of the victors. The confusion on the rampart had been occasioned by the death of General Rusca, who was killed by a cannon-ball while bravely encouraging his men; and with him all presence of mind on the part of the garrison seemed to have been extinguished.[2]

[2] Dan. 127, 129. Koch, i. 277, 278. Lab. ii. 208, 209. Vaud. ii. 24, 27. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 281, 284.

The capture of this important strategetical point, which Napoleon regarded of such value that he had commenced the tracing out of a great intrenched camp, capable of containing his whole army, in its vicinity, was a severe blow

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to him, and would have been immediately attended by the most important consequences, were it not for the succession of disasters which at this very time were befalling the army of Silesia, which rendered it extremely hazardous for the Russian general to pursue his success any further on the road from Laon to Paris. The capture of Soissons made Chernicheff acquainted with these important events; and, at the same time, Winzingerode received orders from Blucher to march to Rheims, in order to be at hand to form a reserve for his forces, so grievously weakened by the bloody campaign of the last three weeks. Chernicheff therefore wisely concluded, that to retain Soissons would be to expose its garrison to certain destruction from the victorious French armies, now at no great distance; and, at the same time, weaken his detachment to such a degree as to endanger the whole. He therefore, though with bitter regret, abandoned his brilliant conquest the very day he had made it, and marched in the direction of Rheims, where he joined Winzingerode. Meanwhile a detachment of Mortier's troops reoccupied Soissons, which was again put in a posture of defence; and Sacken, York, and Langeron joined Blucher at Chalons, where the veteran marshal was indefatigably engaged in reorganising and concentrating his army. With such success were his efforts attended, and such was the magnitude of the resources still at his disposal, that by the 18th February he had collected forty-five thousand infantry and fourteen thousand cavalry, with which he was ready to renew active operations.[1]

93. Which is evacuated by the Russians, and reoccupied by the French.

[1] Dan. 128, 130. Koch, i. 275, 277. Lab. ii. 203, 209. Vaud. i. 399, 400. Richter, iii. 179, 180. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 283, 284.

Napoleon, on the second day after the conflict of Montereau, put his army in motion, and ascended the course of the Seine to Bray and Nogent. Everywhere the Allied columns retired before him. At the latter town he found the most deplorable traces of the ravages of war, and decisive marks of the desperate stand which Bourmont, with his devoted rearguard, had made ten days before against the attacks of the Allies. The walls were pierced

94. Concentration of the Allied armies in front of Troyes.

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with cannon-balls: many streets were in ruins: everywhere the traces of conflagration and destruction were to be seen. In the midst of these disasters, the Sisters of Charity had remained at their post, tending, with heroic devotion, in the public hospital, the wounded and suffering alike among their friends and their enemies. During

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this day's march good order was preserved in the Allied columns, and the artillery and chariots, favoured by a clear bright frost, which made the fields everywhere passable, even for the heaviest carriages, were all brought

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off in safety. But on the succeeding day the usual symptom of disorder and confusion appeared among the retreating host. The converging of so many different columns, and such a multitude of carriages towards one highway, necessarily produced great difficulty; and the Allied troops, long accustomed to victory, loudly murmured at a retreat before a force little more than half of their own. The resolution, however, of the Allied sovereigns to concentrate their forces, and accept battle in front of Troyes, had been definitely taken; Blucher was already in full march across from the banks of the Marne to the valley of the Seine to join them; the retreat was continued on the 21st towards Troyes, and on the evening of that day a hundred and forty thousand men were assembled between Mery, Arcis-sur-Aube, and Sommesous, covering all the approaches to Troyes. Such was the vigour with which Blucher reorganised his beaten army, that he appeared at the rendezvous at Mery with fifty thousand men and three hundred pieces of cannon.[1]

[1] Burgh. 148, 149. Fain, 116, 117. Dan. 157, 161, 162. Koch, i. 330, 333.

95. Napoleon offers battle to Schwartzenberg, who declines it. Feb. 22.

Napoleon made no attempt to prevent the junction of the grand Allied and Silesian armies. He remained several days at Nogent, employed in making a new distribution of his troops; and in sending orders to Augereau at Lyons, by whom he hoped the decisive blow against the rear of Schwartzenberg would be struck. The latter, surprised at the inactivity of the French Emperor,

made a grand reconnoissance with ten thousand horse on the 22d, which brought on a heavy cannonade, but it led to nothing decisive. After it was over, the French, without being seriously molested, took up their line of battle between Pouy and Les Gréz, in sight of the Grand Army, which stood in front of Troyes, stretching on both sides of the Seine, from Mongueux on the right to Villecerf on the left. A great battle was expected on both sides, and each made preparations to receive it. But the spirit of the two hosts was widely different. The recent extraordinary success of the French had restored all their former confidence to the soldiers ; their trust in the star of the Emperor had returned ; and, though well aware of the numerical superiority of their opponents, they had witnessed the confusion and precipitance of their retreat, and felt assured of victory. On the other hand, the Allies were depressed by the little fruit which they had derived from so many successes ; they were mortified at the defeats they had recently sustained from an army not half their number; and felt no confidence in the ability or firmness of the Austrian commander-in-chief, at the head of so multifarious an array, to withstand the sudden and weighty strokes of Napoleon.[1]

[1] Burgh. 148, 149. Dan. 161, 162. Koch, i. 330, 332. Plotho, iii. 232, 233.

96. Desponding views which prevailed in the Allied armies, and their retreat.

Above all, despondency and vacillation had taken possession of the generals at headquarters. They were dismayed at the prospect of a long retreat to the Rhine through a hostile population ; and the Austrian officers, in particular, felt all their wonted apprehensions at the prospect of the army of Augereau, which report had magnified to forty thousand men, falling on their long line of communication towards the Jura. "The Grand Army," said they, "has lost half its numbers by the sword, disease, and wet weather ; the country we are now in is ruined ; the sources of our supplies are dried up ; and all around us, the inhabitants are ready to raise the standard of insurrection. The loss of a battle, in such circumstances, would draw after it a retreat to the Rhine ; where, in all probability,

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we should be met by the corps of Marshal Augereau, who has forty thousand men under his command. It has become indispensable to secure a retreat to Germany, and wait for reinforcements from thence, as well as to arrest the progress of the enemy in the south, before we think of resuming offensive operations." In the council of war held at Troyes on the 23d, these opinions prevailed with the majority, as is invariably the case where a serious decision is devolved upon a body, the *smallness* of whose numbers throws upon each individual a sense of responsibility, without the credit of decision. The bolder counsels of the Emperor Alexander, who strongly urged that they should resume the offensive, and fight a great battle, were overruled. The retreat was accordingly continued all night through Troyes, which was abandoned next day; and, as confusion and disorder soon spread to an alarming extent in the retiring columns, it was deemed advisable to offer Napoleon an armistice, for which purpose Prince Wentzel Lichtenstein, one of Schwartzenberg's officers, was despatched to his headquarters.[1]

Feb. 23.

[1] Dan. 162, 165. Burgh. 148, 150. Fain, 117, 119. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 427, 429. Plotho, iii. 231.

97. Armistice of Lusigny. Feb. 24.

Napoleon received the aide-de-camp in the hamlet of Chartres, where he had passed the night. He brought, along with the proposal for an armistice, an answer from the Emperor Francis to the private letter which Napoleon had written to him six days before from Nangis—a sure proof that the separate interests of Austria were beginning to disjoint the alliance. This letter contained the most conciliatory expressions; admitted that the plans of the Allies had been seriously deranged; and concluded with stating, that in the rapidity and force of his strokes, the Emperor recognised the former great character of his son-in-law. As usual with him, on such occasions, Napoleon entered into a long and confidential conversation with Prince Lichtenstein; and after it had continued a considerable time, asked him, whether the reports were well founded which were in circulation, as to the intention of the Allied sovereigns to dethrone him, and replace

the Bourbon family on the throne of France. Prince Lichtenstein warmly repudiated the idea, and assured the Emperor that the reports were altogether destitute of foundation. Napoleon, however, professed himself by no means satisfied with these explanations, and protested that the presence of the Duc de Berri in Jersey, that of the Duc d'Angoulême at Wellington's headquarters, and, above all, that of the Comte d'Artois in Switzerland, in the rear of the Grand Army, were little calculated to allay his apprehensions on this head.[1]

[1] Fain, 122, 123. Burgh. 151. Dan. 166, 167. Plotho, iii. 232.

98. Its conditions and line of demarcation between the two armies.

Towards evening the officer was sent back with a haughty letter from Berthier to Schwartzenberg, in which he stated that "the assurances given to your Highness of its being the wish of Austria to bring about a general pacification had induced the Emperor to accede to the proposal." The plenipotentiaries appointed to conclude the armistice, were Count Shuvaloff on the part of Russia, Duca on that of Austria, and Rauch for Prussia; and Lusigny was the place fixed on for the conference. The principal conditions were, that the passes of the Vosges mountains were to remain in the hands of the Allies; and that the line of demarcation between the two armies was to be the line of the Marne, as far as Chalons, for the grand army, and thence along the course of the Vele till it joins the Aisne, for that of Silesia. But so confident was Napoleon in the returning good fortune of his arms, that, contrary to the wishes of the Austrians, he would not consent to a suspension of hostilities while the conferences for an armistice were going on; and Alexander, who was strongly averse to the armistice, took advantage of this circumstance to direct Winzingerode to pay no attention to any intimation he might receive of a suspension of hostilities, till he received a special order from himself.[2]

[2] Plotho, iii. 223. Dan. 166, 167. Fain, 122. 123. Burgh. 155, 157. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 430, 431.

It was not without the most vigorous remonstrances on the part both of Blucher and Alexander, that this perilous resolution to retreat was at this period taken by the

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Allied council. On being informed of the intention of the Austrian generalissimo to retreat from before Troyes, the old marshal became literally furious; openly charged him with bribery and treachery; and declared he would on no account retreat with him, but would separate and march direct on Paris, in order to compel Napoleon to give up the pursuit of the Grand Army, and turn his forces against that of Silesia. Alexander, on being informed of these intentions, approved of them, but directed the field-marshal previously to give the details of his plan. Blucher immediately, with his own hand, wrote out on a torn sheet of paper the following note:—"1. The retreat of the Grand Army will cause the whole French nation to take up arms; and the French who have declared for the good cause will suffer. 2. Our victorious armies will lose heart. 3. We shall retreat into a country where there are no supplies, and where the inhabitants, being forced to give up their last morsel, will be reduced to despair. 4. The Emperor of the French will recover from the consternation into which he has been thrown by our successes, and will, as before, win back the confidence of the nation. Most heartily do I thank your Majesty for the permission you have given me to resume the offensive. I flatter myself with the hopes of success, if your Majesty will give positive orders to Generals Winzingerode and Bulow to place themselves under my command. Joined by them, I shall march on Paris, fearing neither Napoleon nor his marshals, if they should come to meet me."[1]

99. Remonstrance of Blucher against this resolution to retreat.

[1] Dan. 171, 172.

100. Reoccupation of Troyes by Napoleon, and execution of M. Goualt.

A lamentable catastrophe attended the return of good fortune to the cause of Napoleon, and stained if it did not disgrace his arms. On the evening of the 23d, the French advanced posts appeared before the gates of Troyes, and notwithstanding the sort of truce which existed, some skirmishing took place between the videttes on either side. During the night, however, the town was entirely evacuated by the Allied troops, and at daybreak on the following

morning Napoleon entered it, without opposition, in the midst of his Guards. The middle and poorer classes, who were unanimous in favour of his government, received the Emperor with unbounded enthusiasm, although the higher classes, who were for the most part attached to the exiled dynasty, kept aloof. As he passed through the streets crowds surrounded him, striving to kiss his hand or touch his horse, and with loud acclamations saluted him as the saviour of his country. The first thing he did was to order the arrest of the Marquis de Widranges and M. Goualt. The former, having been secretly forewarned of his danger by Fouché,* had set out some time before for Bâle, and so escaped; but the latter, in spite of all the entreaties of his friends, had persisted in remaining in Troyes, being unwilling to leave his wife, who could not be moved, and to whom he was tenderly attached. He was immediately arrested, brought before a military commission, and condemned to death. M. Duchatel, with whom the Emperor was lodged, threw himself at his feet, and, with M. Goualt's family, implored pardon, reminding him how much a deed of clemency would add to the lustre of his victory. But the Emperor, though often inclined to mercy when the first fit of passion was over, on this occasion was inexorable, and the unfortunate gentleman was left to his fate. At eleven at night he was led out, by torchlight, surrounded by gendarmes, to the place appointed for public executions; on his back and his breast was affixed a placard, with the words, written in large characters, "Traitor to his country;" and he died with heroic firmness, without permitting his eyes to be bandaged, and protesting with his last breath his devotion to his king and country.[1]

[1] Fain, 129, 131. Lab. ii. 247, 249. Beauch. ii. 23, 25.

Napoleon had now performed the most extraordinary and brilliant military achievements in his long and event-

* Chateaubriand, *Memoirs*, vi.

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101. General result of these successes on the part of Napoleon.

ful career. Recovering his army, by the force of his resolution and the energy of his character, from the lowest point of depression, he had at once arrested the course of disaster, after an apparently decisive defeat, and struck the most terrible blows against his adversaries. Suddenly stopping his retreat, crossing the country, and falling perpendicularly on the line of march of the army of Silesia, he had surprised the Prussian marshal in a straggling and unguarded situation, where his scattered corps fell an easy prey to the superior force which was directed against them. At Champaubert, Montmirail, and Vauchamps, he had inflicted a loss of fully twenty thousand men on that iron band of veterans, without being weakened on his own side by more than a fourth part of the number; while at Nangis and Montereau he had stopped the advance of the Grand Army, inflicted on them a loss of twelve thousand men, and thrown back their victorious standards across the Seine. Such was the terror produced by his arms, that irresolution and circumspection had succeeded to boldness and decision in the Allied councils. The intrepid advice of Alexander and Blucher was disregarded; and a hundred and forty thousand of the bravest troops in Europe abandoned the capital of Champagne, retreated ignominiously before sixty thousand, and concluded by soliciting an armistice from them. When it is recollected that these marvellous results were gained by a force which never could bring above seventy thousand sabres and bayonets into the field, against a host of more than double that number, composed of the veteran soldiers who had saved Russia and delivered Germany, and that though thus inferior upon the whole, he was always superior at the point of attack, it must be admitted that a more brilliant series of military movements is not recorded in history; and that, if none other existed to signalise his capacity, they alone would be sufficient to render the name of Napoleon immortal. To say that they were in the end unsuccessful, is no impeach-

ment of their merit; if they did not achieve success, they deserved it.



"Ne crains point de succès qui souille ta mémoire,
Le bon et le mauvais sont égaux pour ta gloire:
Et dans un tel dessein le manque de bonheur
Met en péril ta vie, et non pas ton honneur." *

102. Errors of the Allied generals.

It must at the same time be observed, that the genius of the French Emperor was seconded to the utmost by the opposite and contradictory qualities of the two commanders-in-chief of the Allied armies. Blucher, daring, impetuous, and confident, was hastening on to Paris, with his columns so far dissevered, and so incapable of supporting each other in case of danger, that they seemed at once to invite a flank attack, and defy mutual co-operation; while Schwartzenberg, slow, methodical, and circumspect, was alike disqualified to lend him any assistance in case of need, or relieve him from the pressure of the enemy by the vigour of his own operations. Thus the former was as likely to run headlong into hazards as the latter was, by never daring, never to win. The extreme anxiety of the one for a vigorous advance, exposed him as much to danger, as the strong disposition of the other for the favourite Austrian manœuvre of a retreat, disabled him from obviating it. The great merit of the French Emperor—and, situated as he was, it was of the very highest kind—consisted in his clear appreciation of the opposite qualities of these two commanders; in the genius which made him perceive, that the hardihood of the one would expose him to perils, while the circumspection of the other would admit of his being almost entirely neglected; and in the moral courage which, refusing to be subdued even by the most serious disasters, saw in them only the germ of false confidence to his antagonists, and the opportunity of recalling victory to the imperial standards for himself.

* Corneille, *Cinna*, Act I. scene 3.

## CHAPTER LXXXVI.

### CAMPAIGN OF 1814—FROM THE ARMISTICE OF LUSIGNY TO THE BATTLE OF LAON.

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1. Council at Bar-sur-Aube.

MATTERS had now arrived at that point, from the moral effect of these successes on the councils of the majority of the Allies, that the success of the invasion of France, and with it the holding together of the Grand Alliance, hung by a thread. The influence of Alexander, great as it was, and strenuously as it had been exerted on the side of vigorous measures, was unable singly to stem the torrent of despondency, or retain the Allied army in that intrepid course, from which alone ultimate salvation to the cause of Europe could be hoped. At this crisis, however, he received the most vigorous co-operation from the moral courage of LORD CASTLEREAGH ; and it was to the combined firmness of these two great men that the triumph of the alliance is beyond all question to be ascribed. On the 25th February the Allied sovereigns assembled at the house of General Knesebeck, at Bar-sur-Aube, as from illness he was unable to leave his apartment, or to attend the council elsewhere. Besides the sovereigns, the following persons were present—Prince Volkonsky, Baron Diebitch, Count Nesselrode, Princes Schwartzenberg and Metternich, Count Radetsky, Lord Castlereagh, and Prince Hardenberg. At this council Alexander strongly supported, as he had always done, the policy of vigorous operations,[1] and openly announced that he would authorise

[1] Dan. 173. Lord Ripon to Lord Londonderry, July 6, 1839.

Blucher to recommence the offensive, notwithstanding the armistice of Lusigny, which did not extend beyond the Grand Army, if he could be reinforced by the corps of Bulow and Winzingerode, the former of which was still in Flanders, though on the French frontier, while the latter was in the neighbourhood of Laon.

2. Serious difficulty arising from the corps of Bernadotte not being subject to the orders of the council.

But here a very great, and what appeared to the majority of the council an insurmountable difficulty, presented itself. These corps belonged to the army of Bernadotte, and took their orders only from him: that prince had not yet passed Liege: a long and tedious negotiation appeared unavoidable before he could be brought to consent to such a dislocation of the troops hitherto under his direct command; his evident and well-known backwardness at co-operating in the invasion of France, rendered it certain that he would do everything in his power to prevent the transference of the largest and most efficient part of his army to so inveterate an enemy of his native country as Marshal Blucher; while at the same time the precarious situation of the alliance, and the evident hesitation of Austria, rendered it a matter of extreme hazard to take any steps which might afford him a pretext for breaking off from it. Yet a decision required to be come to without an instant's delay; for Napoleon had not consented to any suspension of military operations during the conferences.[1]

[1] Earl of Ripon to Lord Londonderry, July 6, 1839. Dan. 173.

3. Decisive effect of Lord Castlereagh's interposition.

Alexander strongly urged the expedience of withdrawing the corps of Winzingerode, Bulow, and Woronzoff from Bernadotte's command; but he concurred with Schwartzenberg in holding, that this was *impossible* without his previous consent, and the majority of the council inclined to this opinion. Upon this Lord Castlereagh inquired of the most experienced officers present, whether, in a military point of view, this change was indispensable to the success of the proposed operations. They answered that it was. Upon this he immediately stated that, in that case, the plan must be adopted, and the necessary

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orders given immediately; that England had a right to expect that her allies would not be deterred from a decisive course by any such difficulties as had been urged; that, if necessary, he would withhold the monthly subsidies from the Crown-Prince till he consented to the arrangement; and that he took upon himself the whole responsibility of any consequences that might arise, so far as regarded that prince. Such was the weight of England at that period in the alliance, as the universal paymaster, as well as the deserved influence of her representative, from his personal character; and such the effect of this manly course, adopted at the decisive moment, that it prevailed with the assembly. The requisite orders were given that very day that "the Grand Army should retreat to Langres, and there, uniting with the Austrian reserves, accept battle; and that the army of Silesia should forthwith march to the Marne, where it was to be joined by the corps of Winzingerode, Bulow, and Woronzoff, and immediately advance to Paris." It is not going too far to assert, that to this resolution, and the moral courage of the minister who brought it about, the downfall of Napoleon is immediately to be ascribed.[1]*

[1] Earl of Ripon to Lord Londonderry, July 6, 1839. Dan. 173. Schwartzenberg's General Orders, Feb. 26, 1814, given in Burgh. 169, 171.

It was not, however, without the utmost difficulty that

* As this is a point of the highest importance, the following extract from a very interesting letter from the Earl of Ripon, who was confidentially engaged with Lord Castlereagh at that period, to the brother of the latter, the present Marquis of Londonderry, is subjoined:—"From Napoleon's central position between the armies of Blucher and Schwartzenberg, he was enabled to fall with his main strength upon each of them singly; and experience had proved that neither of them was separately adequate to withstand his concentrated efforts. Blucher's army was much inferior in number to Schwartzenberg's, and the thing to be done, therefore, was to reinforce Blucher to such an extent as might insure the success of his movements. But where were these reinforcements to be found? There was nothing immediately at hand but a body of Russians under St Priest, who were on their march to Rheims, to join the corps to which they belonged in Blucher's army; and they were manifestly insufficient for the purpose. But there were two other strong corps, one of Prussians under General Bulow, and one of Russians under Winzingerode, who were on their march into France from Flanders, and might be brought forward with decisive effect. They belonged, however, to the army of the Crown-prince of Sweden, who had not at that period, I think, crossed the Rhine; they were under his orders, and he was very tenacious of his authority over them; and

4. Plan of the campaign, agreed to at Bar-sur-Aube.

this decisive resolution was adopted by the Allied sovereigns. The majority of the council maintained that it would be most advantageous for both armies to retreat. Alexander decidedly opposed this opinion; adding that, rather than do so, he would separate from the Grand Army, with the guards, grenadiers, and Wittgenstein's corps, and march with Blucher on Paris. "I hope," added he, turning to the King of Prussia, "that your Majesty, like a faithful ally, of whose friendship I have had so many proofs, will not refuse to accompany me." "I will do so with pleasure," answered that brave prince; "I have long ago placed my troops at your Majesty's disposal." "But why should you leave me behind you?" added the Emperor Francis. But these protestations of the Allied sovereigns, how honourable soever to themselves, determined nothing: the necessity of the Grand Army retreating was resolutely maintained; the separation of Wittgenstein and the Russians would have sent it headlong across the Jura, and probably dissolved the alliance.[1]

[1] Koch, i. 348. Dan. 174, 175.

It was Lord Castlereagh's interposition, by providing the means of adequately reinforcing Blucher *without weakening or dislocating the Grand Army*, which really determined the campaign; and so satisfied was Alexander

when it was suggested that the only mode of adequately reinforcing Blucher was by placing these corps at his disposal without a moment's delay, the difficulty of withdrawing them from Bernadotte's command, without a previous and probably tedious discussion with him, was represented by a great authority as *insurmountable*. Lord Castlereagh was present when this matter was discussed at the council; and the moment he understood that, militarily speaking, the proposed plan was indispensable to success, he took his line. He stated, that in that case the plan *must* be adopted, and the necessary orders *immediately* given; that England had a right to expect that her allies would not be deterred from a decisive course by any such difficulties as had been urged; and he boldly took upon himself the *whole responsibility* of any consequences that might arise, as far as regarded the Crown-prince of Sweden. His advice prevailed: the battle of Laon was fought successfully, and no further efforts of Buonaparte could oppose the march of the Allies to Paris, and their triumphant occupation of that city. It is not, then, too much to say, that the vigour and energy displayed by Lord Castlereagh at this crisis, decided the fate of the campaign."—Lord Ripon *to* Marquis Londonderry, *July* 6, 1839, *given in an Appendix to the Marquis's Letter to Lord Brougham in answer to his Strictures on Lord Castlereagh*, pp. 57, 58.

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5. Great difficulty with which it was effected, and its immediate execution by Alexander.

of this, that the moment the plan was agreed to, he wrote a note to Blucher with his own hand, in pencil, informing him that the corps of Winzingerode and Bulow were now placed under his orders, and authorising him to act according to his discretion, on the sole condition of observing certain rules of military prudence. At the same council it was determined to form, out of the German and Austrian reserves which were about to cross the Jura, combined with the corps of Bianchi, a fresh army, to be called the army of the south, fifty thousand strong, which was to be placed under the direction of Prince Hesse-Homburg, and was to march on Mâcon, drive back Augereau, and secure the flank and rear of the Grand Army from insult; while Bernadotte and the Duke of Saxe-Weimar were to remain in the Low Countries, and complete the reduction of Antwerp, and a few other strong places which held out for the Emperor in Flanders.[1]

[1] Dan. 174, 175. Koch, i. 348, 349.

6. Separation of the Grand Army and the army of Silesia. Feb. 26.

No sooner had this council broken up, than messengers were despatched in all directions with the orders which had been agreed on at this memorable conference. The two armies, so recently united, again separated. The huge masses of the Grand Army slowly retired towards Langres; and Blucher, overjoyed at being liberated from the paralysing authority of Schwartzenberg, resumed his way towards Chalons and the Marne, followed by the great body of the French army, the corps of Oudinot and Macdonald alone being despatched on the traces of the Grand Army. As soon as Blucher perceived that the weight of Napoleon's force was directed against him, he despatched a messenger to inform Schwartzenberg of the fact; the retrograde movement of the Grand Army, the leading

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columns of which had passed Chaumont, and were rapidly approaching Langres, was stopped; and preparations were made for again resuming the offensive, in order to relieve the army of Silesia from the dangers which threatened it. Meanwhile that gallant host, unwearied in combat, and burning with desire to retrieve the defeats

it had lately received, rapidly descended both banks of the Marne. Marmont, obliged to evacuate Sézanne, was driven by La Ferté-Gaucher on La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, whither Mortier also had retired before the advancing corps of Winzingerode. Already the fugitives were appearing at Meaux: Paris was in consternation; and Napoleon, alarmed at the danger of the capital, set out suddenly from Troyes on the morning of the 27th, with his Guards and cuirassiers, to accumulate his forces against his weakened but unconquerable antagonist.[1]

[1] Fain, 138, 139. Koch, i. 350, 357. Dan. 176, 178.

7. Opening of the Congress of Chatillon. Feb. 4.

While these military movements, every one of which seemed to involve the fate of Europe, were in progress, negotiations of the most important kind were going on between the Allied powers and the French Emperor; and a new treaty among the former had been entered into, which again cemented and placed on a secure basis their recently somewhat disjointed alliance. It has been already mentioned that, in answer to the Allied declaration from Frankfort, and the proposals for an accommodation, of which M. de St Aignan was the bearer, Napoleon had signified his readiness to treat; and after some delays on both sides, CHATILLON was fixed on as the place for the conferences, which was declared neutral ground, and the congress opened there on the 4th February. The great influence of England at this period in the alliance, might be seen from the number of plenipotentiaries assigned to her in this memorable assembly: they were, Lord Aberdeen, Lord Cathcart, and Sir Charles Stewart,* on the part of Great Britain; Count Razumoffski on that of Russia; Count Stadion for Austria; and Baron Humboldt on behalf of Prussia. Caulaincourt singly sustained the onerous duty of upholding, against such an array of talent and energy, the declining fortunes of Napoleon.[2]

[2] Dan. 2, 14. Lond. 276.

But though both parties professed an anxious desire to come to an accommodation, yet their views were so various

* Now Marquis of Londonderry.

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8. Views of the contending parties at this period.

that it was not difficult to foresee that, as in the preceding year at Prague, the congress would be little more than a form, and the sword must in reality determine the points in dispute between them. Both proceeded on the principle of making the terms which they demanded dependent on the aspect of military affairs; and both, in consequence, readily agreed to the congress continuing its labours amid the din of the surrounding conflict. Alexander from the outset upheld this principle, and strenuously maintained that the terms proposed at Frankfort should not be adhered to, after the great successes of the campaign, and the conquest of a third of France by the Allied forces, had opened to them new prospects, which they could not have entertained before they crossed the Rhine. Napoleon, during the first alarm consequent on the battle of la Rothière, had given Caulaincourt full powers to sign anything which might prevent the occupation of Paris by the victorious Allies; but no sooner had victory returned to his standards at Montmirail and Champaubert, than he retracted, as already noticed, these concessions, enjoined his plenipotentiary to strive for delay, as his prospects were daily brightening, and directed him, above everything, to "sign nothing without his special authority."[1]

[1] Dan. 2, 14, 82. Lond. 276. Fain, 93, 94.

9. The British government send Lord Castlereagh as their plenipotentiary.

The vast importance of the congress which was about to open, had early impressed upon both the Continental and British cabinets the necessity of sending a minister to take the principal direction of the negotiations, who might wield unfettered the whole powers of the government. General Pozzo di Borgo was accordingly sent to London in the close of 1813 to propose this; and the British government at once acquiesced in the propriety of the plan. Lord Harrowby was at first talked of; but the risks of delay in his case, from the necessity of corresponding with the foreign office in London, were such, that it was deemed indispensable to send the minister for foreign affairs himself. No one could have been found in

any rank better qualified than Lord Castlereagh for the task. His high-bred manners, conciliatory disposition, and suavity of temper, were as much fitted to give him influence in the Allied cabinets, as his clearness of intellectual vision, firmness of character, and indomitable moral courage, were calculated to add vigour and resolution to their councils. He received his instructions as to the terms to which he was to agree from a cabinet council, before leaving the British shores.[1]

[1] Lond. 273, 274. Cap. x. 365, 366. Burgh. 161, 164.

10. Views of Great Britain in this negotiation.

England had no demands either to recede from or augment since the war commenced. Her object throughout had been, not to force an unpopular dynasty on an unwilling people; not to wrest provinces or cities from France, in return for those which she had so liberally exacted from all the adjoining states; not even to make her indemnify Great Britain for any part of the enormous expenses to which she had been put during the war; but simply to provide *security for the future;* to establish a barrier alike against the revolutionary propagandism and military violence of her people; to compel her rulers and armies, whether republican or imperial, to withdraw within their own territories, and neither seek to disturb foreign nations by their principles, nor subdue them by their power. For the attainment of these objects, she had uniformly maintained that no security was so desirable, because none was so likely to be effectual, as the restoration of the former line of princes, with whom repose was practicable, and to whom "conquest" was not, according to Napoleon's maxim, "essential to existence." But she had never regarded that as an indispensable preliminary to an accommodation, nor even put it forward on any occasion, from first to last, as the basis of a treaty with the existing rulers of France. In a word, England had nothing to do but to revert to and enforce those principles which she had submitted to the cabinet of St Petersburg before the

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contest began,* which she had announced to Napoleon when first seated, flushed with the triumph of Marengo, on the consular throne ;† and which had formed the basis of the grand alliance projected by Mr Pitt in 1805,‡

* "The terms offered to France should be, the withdrawing her arms within the limits of the French territory, the abandoning her conquests, the rescinding any acts injurious to the sovereignty or rights of any other nation, and the giving, in some unequivocal manner, a pledge of her intention no longer to foment troubles or excite disturbances against foreign governments. In return for these stipulations, the different powers of Europe, who should be parties to this measure, might engage to abandon all measures or views of hostility against France, or interference in her internal affairs, and to maintain a correspondence and intercourse of amity with the existing powers of that country, with whom such a treaty may be concluded."—LORD GRENVILLE, *Minister of Foreign Affairs, to the British Ambassador at St Petersburg, 29th Dec.* 1792; *Ante,* Chap. XIII. § 16.

† "The best and most natural pledge of the abandonment by France of those gigantic schemes of ambition, by which the very existence of society in the adjoining states has so long been menaced, would be the restoration of that line of princes, which for so many centuries maintained the French nation in prosperity at home, and consideration and respect abroad. Such an event would alone have removed, and will at any time remove, all obstacles in the way of negotiation or peace. It would confirm to France the unmolested enjoyment of its ancient territory: and it would give to all the other nations of Europe, in tranquillity and peace, *that security* which they are now compelled to seek by other means. But, desirable as such an event must be, both to France and the world, it is not to this mode exclusively that his Majesty limits the possibility of secure and solid pacification. His Majesty makes no claim to prescribe to France what should be the form of her government, or in whose hands she shall vest the authority necessary for conducting the affairs of a great and powerful nation. He looks only to the security of his own dominions and those of his Allies, and to the general safety of Europe. Whenever he shall judge that such security can in any manner be attained, as resulting either from the position of the country from whose internal situation the danger has arisen, or from such other circumstances, of whatever nature, as may produce the same end, his Majesty will eagerly embrace the opportunity to concert with his allies the means of a general pacification."—LORD GRENVILLE *to* M. TALLEYRAND, *January* 5, 1800; *Parl. History,* XXXIV. 1199, 1201; and *Ante,* Chap. XXX. § 4.

‡ "The views of his Britannic Majesty and of the Emperor of Russia, in bringing about this alliance, are pure and disinterested. Their chief object, in regard to the countries which may be conquered from France, is to establish as much as possible their *ancient rights,* and to secure the wellbeing of their inhabitants; but in pursuing that object they must not lose sight of the general security of Europe, on which indeed that wellbeing is mainly dependent." Then follows a specification of the disposal to be made of the *conquests* of France, in the event of the alliance succeeding in wresting them from that power; without a syllable either as to despoiling her of any of the ancient provinces of the monarchy, or of interfering in the remotest degree with her internal government.—MR PITT'S *note to the* EMPEROR OF RUSSIA, *January* 11, 1805; SCHOELL, *Histoire des Traités de Paix,* vii. 59; and *Ante,* Ch. XXXIX. § 49.

shortly before the dreadful catastrophe of the Austerlitz campaign. She did so, accordingly; she demanded neither more nor less.

11. Their extraordinary magnanimity, and united steadiness and moderation of her conduct.

So memorable an instance of constancy in adverse, and moderation in prosperous fortune, does not occur in the whole annals of mankind. We admire the magnanimity of the Romans, who refused to treat with Hannibal, when encamped within sight of the Capitol, till he had first evacuated the territories of the republic; we pay a just tribute to the heroism of Alexander, who surrendered the ancient capital of his empire to the flames, rather than permit it to be sullied by the presence of the spoiler; we acknowledge the glory which is shed over Spain, by the undaunted resolution of her Cortes never to negotiate with Napoleon, even when the remnant of her armies was shut up within the walls of Cadiz. But these were instances of constancy in adverse, not of moderation in prosperous fortune. To have maintained for twenty years a contest, often unaided, with an enemy possessing more than double her own resources; to have neither advanced beyond nor receded from her principles during that long period; to have put forward no pretensions in victory which she had not maintained in defeat; to have concluded peace with her inveterate enemy when her capital was in her power, and her Emperor dethroned, and exacted no conditions from the vanquished on which she had not offered to maintain peace before the contest commenced* —this is the glory of England, and of England alone.

* "England will never consent that France should arrogate to herself the power of annulling at pleasure, under cover of a pretended natural right, of which she makes herself the sole judge, the political system of Europe, established by solemn treaties and guaranteed by the consent of all the powers. She will never see with indifference France make herself, either directly or indirectly, sovereign of the Low Countries, or general arbitress of Europe. If France is really desirous of maintaining peace and friendship with England, let her renounce her views of aggression and aggrandisement, *and confine herself within her own territory, without insulting other governments, disturbing their tranquillity, or violating their rights.*"—LORD GRENVILLE *to* M. CHAUVELIN, *the French Envoy, Feb.* 5, 1793; *State Papers, No.* 1; *Ann. Reg.*; and *Ante*, Chap. IX. § 121.

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12. Instructions to Lord Castlereagh from the English cabinet.

Conformably to these principles, the instructions of Lord Castlereagh from the British cabinet contained no projects for the partition of any part of France as that monarchy existed in 1789, prior to the commencement of the Revolution, but the most ample provision for the establishment of barriers against its future irruption into Europe. The reduction of France to its ancient limits; the formation of a federative union in Germany, which might secure to the meanest of its states the protection of the whole; the re-establishment of the Swiss confederacy under the guarantee of the great powers; the restoration of the lesser states of Italy, intermediate between France and Austria, to a state of independence; the restoration of Spain and Portugal under their ancient sovereigns, and in their former extent; and lastly, the restitution of Holland to separate sovereignty, under the family of the Stadtholders, with such an addition of territory as might give it the means of maintaining that blessing—such were the instructions of the English cabinet, in regard to the general restoration of the balance of power in Europe, in so far as France was concerned; and in these propositions all the Allied powers concurred. With a view, however, to the especial security of England, two additional provisions were insisted upon, regarding which the British cabinet was inflexible. The first of these was, that no discussion even, derogatory to the British maritime rights, as settled by existing treaties, or the general maritime law of Europe, should be admitted; the second, that in the event of any new arrangements being deemed advisable for the future frontiers of France, they should not embrace Antwerp, Genoa, or Piedmont. The first was justly considered essential to the maritime security of England; the second, to the independence of the Italian states, on which side, as no general confederacy was contemplated, the greatest danger might in future be apprehended.[1]

[1] Hard. xii. 318, 320. Cap. x. 366.

In these instructions, however, two important points

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13. Restoration of the Bourbons, and difficulties in which it was involved.

were purposely left undecided; not because they were overlooked, or their importance not fully appreciated, but because their solution was involved in such difficulty, and was so dependent on future contingencies, that no directions previously given could possibly prove applicable to every case which might arise during the subsequent march of events. These were the restoration of the Bourbons, and the future destiny of Poland.

On the first of these points, the instructions contained no specific directions, because it was the intention of England, not less than of the other Allied powers, not to interfere with the wishes and intentions of the French people. Lord Castlereagh, indeed, in conformity with the declared purpose of British diplomacy ever since the commencement of the war, made no concealment of his opinion, either in or out of parliament,* that the best security for the peace of Europe would be found in the restoration of the dispossessed race of princes to the French throne; and "the ancient race and the ancient territory," was often referred to by him, in private conversation, as offering the only combination which was likely to give lasting repose to the world. But it was as little his design, as it was that of the British cabinet, to advance these views as a preliminary to any, even the most lasting, accommodation.[1]

[1] Hard. xii. 318, 320. Cap. x. 367.

Such a reaction, to have any likelihood of being durable, and to avoid exciting the immediate jealousy of Austria for the succession of Napoleon's son, could only be founded upon a movement in France itself, and such a manifestation of opinion within its limits, as might render it

* "Every pacification would be incomplete, if you did not re-establish on the throne of France the ancient family of the Bourbons: any peace with the man who had placed himself at the head of the French nation, could have no other final result but to give to Europe fresh subjects of division and alarms —it could be neither secure nor durable. Nevertheless, it was impossible to refuse to negotiate with him, when invested with power, without doing violence to the opinion of Europe, and incurring the whole responsibility of the continuance of the war."—LORD CASTLEREAGH'S *Speech in Parliament, 29th June,* 1814; *Parl. Debates,* xxviii. 458.

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14. Views of the English and Russian governments regarding the Bourbons.

evident that no chance remained of a continuance of the crown in the Buonaparte family. The views of Alexander were entirely the same at this period, so far as regarded the government of France; and his able diplomatist, General Pozzo di Borgo, when sent to London to induce the British government to send Lord Castlereagh to the Allied headquarters, thus expressed himself to the Comte d'Artois, who pressed him to explain the ideas of the Czar on the subject of the Bourbon family—"My lord, everything has its time; let us not perplex matters. To sovereigns you should never present complicated questions. It is with no small difficulty that they have been kept united in the grand object of overthrowing Buonaparte: as soon as that is done, and the imperial rule destroyed, the question of dynasty will present itself: and then your illustrious house will spontaneously occur to the thoughts of all."[1]

[1] Cap. x. 367. Hard. xii. 318, 322. Private information.

15. Division of opinion regarding Poland.

But though entirely in unison on this momentous subject, the cabinets of England and Russia were far from being equally agreed as to another subject, which, it was foreseen, would speedily present itself for discussion on the overthrow of Napoleon—and that was the future destiny of Poland. That the old anarchical democracy of that country, with its stormy *comitia, liberum veto*, internal feuds, and external weakness, could not be restored, if the slightest regard was felt either for the general balance of power in Europe, or the welfare of that gallant but distracted people themselves, was evident to all. But what to do with Poland, amid the powerful and now victorious monarchies by which it was surrounded, all of whom, it might be foreseen, would be anxious to share its spoils, was not so apparent. In a private conversation with Sir Charles Stewart, at this period, the Emperor Alexander openly announced those views, in regard to the annexation of the grand-duchy of Warsaw to his dominions, which subsequently occasioned such difficulty at the congress of Vienna. He stated that his

moral feelings, and every principle of justice and right, called upon him to use his power to restore such a constitution to Poland as would secure the happiness of so noble and great a people; that the abandonment of seven millions of his Lithuanian subjects for the attainment of such an object, if he had no guarantee for the advantage he was thence to derive for Russia, would be more than his imperial crown was worth; and that the only way of reconciling these objects was, by uniting the Lithuanian provinces with the grand-duchy of Warsaw, under such a constitutional administration as Russia might appoint. He communicated at the same time these views to Prince Metternich. Thus early did the habitual ambition of that great power show itself in the European congress; and so clearly, according to the usual course of human affairs, were future difficulty and embarrassment arising out of the very magnitude of present successes.[1]

[1] Lond. 275, 276.

16. Napoleon's instructions to Caulaincourt.

The instructions of Napoleon to his plenipotentiary, Caulaincourt, were of a very different tenor, and such as sufficiently evinced the unlikelihood that the congress would terminate in any permanent accommodation. "It appears doubtful," said he, "whether the Allies really wish a peace; I desire it, but it must be solid and honourable. France, without its natural limits, without Ostend, without Antwerp, would be no longer on a level with the other powers of Europe. England, and all the other Allied powers, have recognised at Frankfort the principle of giving France her natural boundaries. The conquests of France within the Rhine and the Alps can never compensate what Austria, Russia, and Prussia have acquired in Finland, in Poland, or what England has seized in India. The policy of England, the hatred of the Emperor of Russia, will carry away Austria. I have accepted the basis announced at Frankfort; but it is probable by this time the Allies have other ideas. Their negotiations are but a mask. The moment that they declared the negotiations subject to the influence of mili-

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tary events, it became impossible to foresee their probable issue. You must hear and observe everything. You must endeavour to discover the views of the Allies, and make me acquainted with them, day by day, in order that I may be in a situation to give you more precise instructions than I can give at present. To reduce France to its ancient limits is to degrade it. They are deceived if they suppose that the misfortunes of war will make the nation desire such a peace: there is not a French heart which would not feel its disgrace before the end of six months, and which would not make it an eternal subject of opprobrium to the government which should be base enough to sign it. Italy is untouched, the Viceroy has a fine army: in a few days I shall have assembled a force adequate to fight several battles, even before the arrival of the troops from Spain. If the nation second me, the enemy is marching to his ruin: if fortune betrays me, my part is taken—I will not retain the throne. I will neither degrade the nation nor myself, by subscribing debasing conditions. Try and discover what are Metternich's ideas. It is not the interest of Austria to push matters to extremity: yet a step, and the lead will escape her. In this state of affairs, there is nothing to prescribe to you. Confine yourself, in the first instance, to hearing everything, and inform me of what goes on. I am on the eve of joining the army; we shall be so near that scarcely any delay will occur in making me acquainted with the state of the negotiations."[1]

[1] Napoleon to Caulaincourt, Jan. 4, 1814. Cap. x. 369, 370.

17. Commencement of the Congress. Jan. 23.

When the views of the opposite parties were so widely at variance, it was not likely that the negotiations could lead to any result, or serve as more than a pretext to both parties for regulating the terms insisted on according to the aspect of military affairs. Yet were the conferences nearer leading to the conclusion of a peace, at their outset, than could possibly have been anticipated. The congress opened on the 3d of February at Chatillon; and from the great weight of Lord Castlereagh at the Allied

headquarters, the utmost union was soon brought to prevail between the leading ministers of the great powers. In the outset, Napoleon, by means of Caulaincourt, endeavoured to open a private communication with Prince Metternich; but the answer of that able statesman damped the hopes he had hitherto so confidently entertained of detaching Austria from the Alliance, while, at the same time, it sufficiently proved that the cabinet of Vienna was anxious to retain him on the throne, if it could be done consistently with the liberties and security of the other states in Europe.[1] *

[1] Cap. x. 372.

18. Secret correspondence between Metternich and Caulaincourt.

Caulaincourt answered in terms dignified and melancholy, lamenting that Prince Metternich, instead of Count Stadion, was not the minister intrusted with the interests of Austria at the congress, to counterbalance the influence which Lord Castlereagh might exercise in its deliberations; and conjuring him, if he would avert the last calamities from the beloved daughter of his Emperor, to exert his efforts to bring about a fair and equitable peace.†

* "I received yesterday evening the confidential letter of the 23d, which your Excellency has addressed to me. I have submitted it to the Emperor my master, and his imperial Majesty has resolved to make no use of its contents—it will remain for ever unknown: and I pray your Excellency to believe, that in the existing state of matters, any confidence reposed in our cabinet is beyond the reach of any abuse. I have a pleasure in making known to you this assurance, in a moment of such immense importance for Austria, France, and Europe. The conduct of my sovereign has been uniform and consistent. He has engaged in this war without hatred; he pursues it without resentment. The day that he gave his daughter to the prince who then governed Europe, he ceased to behold in him a personal enemy. The fate of war has since changed the attitude of all. If the Emperor Napoleon will listen in these moments to the voice of reason—if he will consent to seek his glory in the happiness of a great people, in renouncing his former ambitious policy—the Emperor will with pleasure revert to the feelings he entertained when he gave him the daughter of his heart; but if a fatal blindness shall render the Emperor Napoleon deaf to the unanimous voice of his people and of Europe, he will deplore the fate of his daughter, but not arrest his course."—*Confidential Letter*, METTERNICH *to* CAULAINCOURT, 29*th Jan.* 1814; given in CAPEFIGUE, *Hist. de l'Empire de Napoléon*, x. 372, 373.

† "The arrival of the Allied troops at Paris would be the commencement of a series of changes which Austria assuredly would not be the last to regret. If the war is to terminate by our overthrow, has Austria nothing to regret in such a catastrophe? What profit is she to acquire, what glory to win, if we are overwhelmed by all the armies of Europe? You, my prince, have a boundless

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Metternich replied: "M. Caulaincourt has conceived erroneous ideas concerning Lord Castlereagh. He is a man of a cool and just mind, without passions, who will never permit himself to be governed by coteries. It would be unfortunate if, in the outset of the congress, prejudices should be entertained against the individuals engaged in it. If Napoleon really wishes for peace, he will obtain it on reasonable terms." This separate and confidential correspondence between Metternich and Caulaincourt, unknown to the other members of the congress, but yet without disturbing the unanimity of its resolutions, continued the whole time it sat: a singular circumstance, indicating at once the strength of the separate interests which had led Austria into such a proceeding, the extremely delicate nature of the negotiations which were in dependence, and the exalted honour which, in spite of such prepossessions, prevented her from swerving, in the final result, from her pledged faith and the general interests of Europe.[1]

[1] Cap. x. 373, 374. See the whole in Fain, 279, 309.

19. Napoleon gives Caulaincourt full powers after the defeat of la Rothière.

The battle of la Rothière, and retreat of the French army from Troyes, produced a most important effect upon the views of Napoleon at the congress which had recently been opened. Justly alarmed for his capital, which seemed now to be menaced by an overwhelming force, and aware of the perfect unanimity which prevailed between the plenipotentiaries of the Allied sovereigns, he at length gave Caulaincourt those full powers which he had so anxiously solicited;* and authorised him to sign

harvest of glory to reap; but it is to be gained only by your remaining the arbiter of events, and the only way in which you can do so is by an immediate peace." — CAULAINCOURT *to* METTERNICH, *8th February* 1814; CAPEFIGUE, x. 372.

* "Sire! I am here at Châtillon, opposed to four diplomatists, counting the three English for one. They have all the same instructions, prepared by the secretaries of state of their respective courts. Their language has been dictated to them in advance; the declarations which they tender are all ready-made: they do not take a step, nor utter a word, which has not been preconcerted. They are desirous of a protocol, and I am not disinclined to it; so precious are the moments, and yet so great the hazard by a false step of ruining all. I set out with my hands bound: I have just received a letter full of alarms: and I

anything that might appear necessary to avoid the risk of a battle, and save Paris from being taken.* It was not, however, without the utmost difficulty that this great concession was extorted from the Emperor; and the manner in which it occurred is singularly characteristic of the mingled firmness and exaltation of his mind. Caulaincourt had represented to him, by letter on 31st January, the absolute necessity of his receiving precise and positive instructions at the opening of the congress: "The fate of France," said he, "may depend on a peace or an armistice, which must be concluded in four days. In such circumstances I demand precise instructions, which may leave me at liberty to act." [1]

[1] Cap. x. 375. Hard. xii. 333, 334.

20. Magnanimous resolution of Napoleon.

When this letter was received, Maret, with tears in his eyes, entreated the Emperor to yield to necessity, and give the full powers which were urgently demanded. Instead of answering, Napoleon opened a volume of Montesquieu's works, containing the "Grandeur et décadence des Romains," which lay in his cabinet, and read the following passage:—"I know nothing more magnanimous than the resolution which a monarch took who has reigned in our times, (Louis XIV.,) to bury himself under the ruins of his throne rather than accept conditions unworthy of a king. He had a mind too lofty to descend

now find myself invested with full powers. I am at once reined in and spurred on: I know not the cause of this extraordinary change."—CAULAINCOURT *to* NAPOLEON, *Feb.* 6, 1814; FAIN, 289; CAPEFIGUE, x. 375, 376. It is not surprising that Caulaincourt was at a loss to conceive the cause of this sudden change; for so inveterate was the habit of Napoleon of concealing the truth, and of dealing in falsehoods, even with his most confidential servants, that only two days before, in his letter to Caulaincourt, detailing the battle of la Rothière, he had said—"Schwartzenberg's report is a piece of folly: *there was no battle:* the Old Guard was not there; the Young Guard did not charge; a few pieces of cannon have been captured by a charge of horse; but the army was in march for the bridge of Lesmont when that event happened; and had he been two hours later, the enemy would not have forced us."—NAPOLEON *to* CAULAINCOURT, *Feb.* 4, 1814—*in* HARDENBERG, xii. 332. The words in italics are *omitted* in Fain's quotation of this letter.—See FAIN, 285; *Pièces Just.*

* "I am authorised, duke, to make known to you, that the intention of the Emperor is, that you should consider yourself as invested with all the powers necessary, in these important circumstances, to take the part which you shall deem advisable to arrest the progress of the enemy. I have sent you a letter

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lower than his fortunes had sunk him; he knew well that courage may strengthen a crown, but infamy never." Maret with earnestness represented that nothing could be more magnanimous than to sacrifice even his glory to the safety of the state, which would fall with him. "Well, be it so," replied the Emperor after a pause: "let Caulaincourt sign whatever is necessary to procure peace. I will bear the shame of it, but I will not dictate my own disgrace." In two hours after, the full powers were despatched.[1]

[1] Hard. xii. 333, 334. Cap. x. 375.

21. Conditions proposed by the Allied powers. Feb. 7.

The Allied powers were unanimous in the terms which they proposed to France; and, after the preliminary formalities had been gone through, they were fully developed in a note lodged in their joint names, on the 7th February. They were to this effect:—"Considering the situation of Europe in respect to France, at the close of the successes obtained by their arms, the Allied plenipotentiaries have orders to demand that France should be restricted to *her limits before the Revolution*, with the exception of subordinate arrangements for mutual convenience, and the restitution which England is ready to make for such concession. As a natural consequence of this, France must renounce all direct influence within the future limits of Germany, Italy, and Switzerland." Such was the consternation produced by the battle of la Rothière, that Caulaincourt, two days afterwards, wrote in reply: "I wish to know whether, by consenting to the terms which the Allies have proposed, that France shall be restricted to her ancient limits, I shall immediately obtain an armistice.[2] If by such a sacrifice an armistice can instantly be obtained, I am ready to make it; nay,

Feb. 9.

[2] Caulaincourt to Metternich, Feb. 9, 1814. Fain, 293. Hard. xii. 337.

with the needful powers which you have solicited. At the moment when his Majesty is about to quit this city, he has enjoined me to despatch to you a second; and to make you aware, in express terms, that his Majesty gives you a *carte blanche* to conduct the negotiations to a happy issue—to save the capital, on which depend the last hopes of the nation, and avoid a battle."—MARET *to* CAULAINCOURT, *Troyes, 5th February* 1814; FAIN, 286, 287; *Pièces Just.*

I shall be ready, on that supposition, to surrender immediately a portion of the fortified places which that sacrifice must make us ultimately relinquish."

22. They are departed from by Napoleon.

To all appearance, therefore, the congress at this period was on the eve of producing a general peace; and an armistice, as the first step towards it, might hourly be expected. At this critical juncture, however, a letter was forwarded to the plenipotentiaries from the Emperor of Russia, requesting a suspension of these sittings for a few days, till he had an opportunity of concerting with his Allies upon the terms to be demanded; and they were accordingly adjourned to the 17th. The fate of the world depended on this delay; for, when the conferences were resumed, events had occurred which rendered all accommodation impossible between the parties, and irrecoverably threw them back upon the decision of the sword. Napoleon, who had with great difficulty been brought to give full powers to Caulaincourt to treat after the disaster of la Rothière, no sooner saw the advantages which the ill-judged separation of the Grand Army from that of Silesia would give him, than he resolved to retract his concessions, and again trust all to the hazard of arms. He received intelligence of the terms demanded on the 9th at Nogent, when he was just on the eve of setting out on his expedition to Sézanne, which terminated in so disastrous a manner for Blucher. Perceiving the advantage which this movement was likely to afford, he broke out in the most vehement manner to Maret and Berthier, against the disgraceful nature of the terms which were demanded.

23. Energetic expressions used by him on the occasion.

"What!" said he, with indescribable energy, "do you urge me to sign such a treaty, and trample under foot my coronation oath to preserve inviolate the territory of the republic? Disasters unheard-of might compel me to relinquish the conquests I myself have made: but to abandon those also made before me—to betray the trust made over to me with such confidence—to leave France,

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after so much blood has been shed and such victories gained, smaller than ever! Could I do it without treachery, without disgrace? You are fearful of a continuation of the war; and I am still more afraid of dangers yet more certain, which you do not perceive. If we renounce the frontier of the Rhine, it is not merely France which recedes, but Austria and Prussia which advance. France has need of peace; but such a one as they seek to impose upon it would be more dangerous than the most inveterate war. What would I be to the French if I had signed their humiliation? What could I answer to the republicans of the Senate, when they came to ask me for the frontier of the Rhine? God preserve me from such affronts! Write to Caulaincourt, since you will have it so; but tell him that I reject the treaty. I prefer to run the greatest risks of war."[1]

[1] Fain, 87, 89.

24. He rises in his demands with his subsequent successes. Feb. 10.

When such were the feelings of Napoleon on setting out upon his expedition against Blucher, it was not to be expected that his disposition would be rendered more pacific by his extraordinary and brilliant successes over that commander. No sooner, accordingly, was the first of these victories, that at Champaubert, gained, than Napoleon wrote to Caulaincourt that a brilliant change had taken place in his affairs; that new advantages were in preparation; and that the plenipotentiary of France was now entitled to assume a less humiliated attitude.

Feb. 13.

Meanwhile the privy council at Paris, to whom the propositions of the Allies at Châtillon had been referred, unanimously reported that they should be agreed to. The Emperor, however, dazzled by the brilliancy of his victories over Blucher, wrote to the Emperor of Austria on the 17th, from Nangis, that he was as anxious as ever for an accommodation; but that the advantages which he had now gained entitled him to demand less unfavourable terms; while to Caulaincourt he wrote, on the same day, that the extraordinary powers he had received were only intended to avoid a battle and save the capital;[2]

Feb. 17. [2] Fain, 84, 106. Napoleon to Caulaincourt, Feb. 17, 1814. Fain, 297.

that now this danger no longer existed, and, consequently, the negotiation would resume its ordinary course of proceeding, and he was to sign nothing without the express authority of the Emperor.*

25. Napoleon orders Eugene to evacuate Italy, and then countermands the order. Feb. 5.

This extraordinary change in his fortunes not only induced Napoleon to resume the powers to treat which he had conferred on Caulaincourt, but led to another step on his part, in the end attended with not less fatal effect upon his fortunes. During the first moments of alarm consequent on the battle of la Rothière and retreat from Troyes, he had written to Eugene Beauharnais to the effect, that the crisis had now become so violent in France that it was plain the contest would be decided there; that all subordinate considerations had thence become of no importance; and, therefore, that, after leaving garrisons in a few strongholds, he should immediately withdraw his whole forces across the Alps, and hasten to the decisive point on the banks of the Seine. This order, worthy of Napoleon's genius, and in strict conformity with his system of war, would have brought forty thousand experienced veterans on the rear of the Austrian Grand Army at the most critical period of the campaign, and, in all probability, prevented the advance to Paris

* "I gave you a *carte blanche* only to avoid a battle and save Paris, which was then the only hope of the nation. The battle has taken place; Providence has blessed our arms. I have made 30,000 or 40,000 prisoners, taken two hundred pieces of cannon, a great number of generals, and all this without almost a serious encounter. Yesterday I cut up the army of Prince Schwartzenberg, and I hope to destroy it before it has repassed the frontiers. Your attitude should continue the same: you should do everything to procure peace; but my intention now is, that you should *sign nothing without my authority, because I alone know my own position.* Generally speaking, I will only consent to an honourable peace, such as on the basis proposed at Frankfort. My position is certainly better now than it was at that time. They could then set me at defiance; I had gained no advantages over them, and they were on the verge of my territories. Now I have gained immense advantages over them; so great indeed that a military career of twenty years, and no small celebrity, can exhibit no parallel to them; still I am ready to cease hostilities, and to allow the enemy to retire peaceably, if they will conclude peace on the basis of Frankfort." At the end of this letter, these words were added in the handwriting of Napoleon:—"*Ne signez rien, ne signez rien.*"—NAPOLEON *to* CAULAINCOURT, 17*th February* 1814. FAIN, 297, 298; *Pièces Just.*

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and dethronement of the Emperor. But the successes over Blucher restored to such a degree his confidence in his good fortune, that he wrote to Eugene, the very night after the battle of Montmirail, forbidding him to retire, and assuring him that he was singly adequate to the defence of France. Nay, so far was he transported by the sanguine views which he now entertained of his affairs, that he resumed his ideas of German conquest, and openly said to those around him, "I am nearer Munich than the Allies are to Paris." Thus the only effect of these successes was to restore the naturally ambitious and unbending tone of his character, to revive his projects of universal dominion, cause him to reject the throne of old France offered him by the Allies, and induce him to hazard all on the still doubtful issue of military operations.[1]

[1] Koch, i. 269. Beauchamp, i. 328.

26. General feeling of despondency at Paris.

But whatever confidence Napoleon himself might feel in the continued appeal to arms, the same feeling was far from being shared by the authorities, or more enlightened part of the inhabitants of Paris. When the couriers, indeed, succeeding one another, adorned with laurel, and announcing, with great exaggeration, the really marvellous victories of the Emperor, entered the courts of the Tuileries; and, still more, when the long files of Russian and Prussian prisoners were conducted with all the pomp of war, and amidst the strains of triumphal music, along the Boulevards—the multitude loudly cheered the Emperor, and hope in the revival of his star was again awakened in many breasts. But amidst all this seeming congratulation, no return of real confidence was generally felt. Experience soon showed that victory attended only the arms of the Emperor in person; that while he was successful in one quarter, the enemy was pressing on in another; and it seemed next to impossible in the end, that the gallant band of veterans whom he commanded should not be worn out by the forces, always twice, often three times more numerous, by which they were sur-

rounded. By the more intelligent and far-seeing of the community, even his victories were more dreaded than his defeats. The latter led to humiliation and peace, but the former tended to confidence and war; and it was already felt that a continuance of the contest, in the present exhausted state of France, was a greater evil than any possible calamities by which it might be terminated. In the Senate, in particular, these ideas were violently fermenting; every one distrusted his neighbour, because he was conscious of vacillation in himself; all confidence in the stability of the imperial throne was at an end; even the most prudent were beginning to speak aloud as to the Emperor being the sole obstacle to peace. Strange rumours were in circulation, to the effect that Joseph and the Empress proposed to make peace independently of the Emperor; and the selfish and ambitious, anticipating an approaching convulsion, were looking about for the safest harbour in the storm.[1]

[1] Savary, iii. 237. Cap. x. 406, 407.

27. Treaty of Chaumont. March 1.

But upon the Allied powers the change in the diplomatic language of Caulaincourt, in obedience to the instructions he had received, coupled with the evident danger to the liberties of Europe from the returning fortune and increasing audacity of Napoleon, produced effects of the very highest importance. They now saw clearly that they had no chance, not merely of success but of existence, except in perfect unanimity and the most vigorous warfare. The exulting expression of Napoleon, that he was nearer Munich than the Allies were to Paris, had not been lost upon the assembled ministers; and Lord Castlereagh, in particular, had been indefatigable in his efforts to convince the Austrian ministers that they would infallibly be the first object of the French Emperor's wrath if his victorious legions should again cross the Rhine. In these views he was strongly supported by the Emperor Alexander, who, in a memoir submitted by him to the Allied sovereigns on the 15th February, both manfully combated the despond-

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ing views then so general at the Allied headquarters as to the critical nature of their situation, and developed the noblest and most luminous views as to the moral nature of the contest in which they were engaged, which had yet been uttered since the commencement of the war. Metternich cordially supported the same ideas; the successes of Napoleon against Blucher had awakened all his former apprehensions of his power; he now feared more for Vienna than for the fall of Marie Louise, and was desirous to prove the sincerity of his imperial master in the great objects of the alliance.* The result of their united efforts was the TREATY OF CHAUMONT—one of the most remarkable diplomatic acts of modern times, and which presented an impassable barrier to the ambition and efforts of France.[1]

[1] Cap. x. 397, 400. Hard. xii. 351. Dan. 189, 191.

28. Terms of the treaty. March 1.

By this treaty it was stipulated that, in the event of Napoleon refusing the terms which had been offered him —viz. the reduction of France to the limits of the old monarchy, as they stood prior to the Revolution—the four Allied powers, Austria, Prussia, Russia, and England,

* Alexander's opinions, recorded in this memorable state paper, are deserving of the most profound attention, as demonstrating both the admirable views which he entertained on the nature of the contest, and the high moral courage by which they were sustained:—"Victory having brought us to Frankfort, the Allies offered to France conditions of peace, which were *then* considered proportionate to the successes which they had obtained; at that period these conditions might have been called the object of the war. I strongly opposed the proposal to negotiate then; not because I did not desire peace, but because I thought that time would offer us more favourable opportunities, when we had proved to the enemy our superiority over him. All are now convinced of the justice of my arguments; for to it we are indebted for the incalculable difference between the terms offered at Frankfort and at Châtillon—that is, the restoration by France of territories without which Germany and Italy would be lost on the first offensive movement.

"The destruction of the enemy's political power does not constitute the grand aim of the efforts which it remains for us to make; but it may become so, if the fortune of war, the example of Paris, and the evident inclination of the inhabitants of the provinces of France, shall give the Allies the possibility of openly proclaiming it. I do not share the opinion of the Allies on the greater or less degree of importance attached by them to the *dethronement of Napoleon*, if that measure can be justified on grounds of wisdom. On the contrary, I should consider that event as the completion of the deliverance of Europe; as the brightest example of justice and morality it is possible to dis-

should each maintain one hundred and fifty thousand men in the field; that to provide for their maintenance, Great Britain should pay an annual subsidy of five millions sterling, to be equally divided between the three Continental powers, besides maintaining her own contingent complete from her own resources. It was stipulated, also, that each power should have a commissary at the headquarters of the different armies; that if any of the Allied powers was attacked, each of the others should forthwith send to its assistance an army of sixty thousand men, including ten thousand horse, besides forwarding additional troops, if required; that if England chose to furnish her contingent, or any part of it, in foreign troops, she should pay annually twenty pounds sterling for every foot-soldier, and thirty for every horseman; that the trophies should be divided equally, and no peace made except by common consent; that none of the contracting parties should enter into engagements with other states, except of the same tenor:[1] in fine, that this treaty should be in force for twenty

[1] See the treaty in Martens, N. R. i. 683; and Hard. xii. 352. Schoell, Hist. des Trait. de Paix, x. 417.

play to the world; and, in short, as the happiest event for France itself, whose internal condition can never be without influence on the tranquillity of her neighbours. Nobody is more convinced than I am of the inconstancy of fortune in war; yet I do not reckon a partial failure, or even the loss of a battle, as a misfortune which should in one day deprive us of the fruit of our victories; and I am convinced that the skill of our generals, the valour of our troops, our superiority in cavalry, the reinforcements which are following us, and the force of public opinion, would never allow us to fall so low as some seem to apprehend. I am by no means adverse to continuing the negotiations at Châtillon, or giving Caulaincourt the explanations he desires regarding the future destiny of Europe, provided France would return to her old frontiers. As to the armistice which is requested in the letter to Prince Metternich, I conceive this proceeding of the French plenipotentiary to be contrary to the existing usages of negotiations, and the proposal to be advantageous only to the enemy. I am as much convinced as ever, that all probability is in favour of a successful issue, if the Allies keep to the views and obligations by which they have been hitherto guided with reference to their grand object, *the destruction of the enemy's armies*. With a good understanding among themselves, their success will be complete, and checks will be easily borne. I do not think that the time has yet arrived for us to stop short; and I trust that, as in former conjunctures, new events will show us when that time shall have arrived."—*Memoir to the Allied Sovereigns by the* Emperor Alexander, 15*th February* 1814; Danilefsky, pp. 88, 90.

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years, and might be renewed before the expiration of that period.

29. Secret articles of the treaty.

In addition to these public stipulations, several secret articles were inserted in the treaty, which eventually proved of the highest importance to the reconstruction of the states of Europe, after the deluge of the French Revolution had subsided. It was agreed, 1st, That Germany should be restored in the form of a federal union, embracing all the powers of which it was composed; that Switzerland should be independent, under the guarantee of the Allied powers; Italy divided into independent states; Spain restored to Ferdinand VII., with its ancient limits; Holland enlarged in territory, and formed into a kingdom for the Prince of Orange. 2d, Power was reserved to Spain, Portugal, Sweden, and the Prince of Orange, to accede to the treaty. 3d, It was declared that, "considering the necessity which might exist, even after the conclusion of a definitive treaty of peace, to keep in the field, during a certain time, forces adequate to carry into effect the arrangements which the Allied powers might agree upon for confirming the peace of Europe, the high contracting parties agree to concert among themselves the requisite provisions, not only regarding the necessity, but the importance and distribution of the forces requisite for this purpose; but under this limitation, that none of the powers should be obliged to keep such forces for this end on foot more than a year, without their express consent."[1]

[1] Hard. xii. 353. Schoell, x. 421.

30. Great effects of this treaty on the congress.

The conclusion of this treaty was a virtual dissolution of the congress of Châtillon; for it established so wide a difference between the views of Napoleon and those of the Allies, and confirmed the latter so strongly in their determination to contend to the uttermost for the reduction of France to its ancient limits, that, opposed as these views were to the firm resolution of Napoleon to hold out for the frontier of the Rhine, all prospect of an accommodation was at an end. The congress continued to sit for

three weeks after, the Allied powers firmly insisting on the relinquishment by France of all its conquests since the Revolution; and Caulaincourt, under Napoleon's direction, constantly shifting his ground, and endeavouring to elude such rigorous conditions. It was not with his own good-will, however, that the French plenipotentiary insisted on these terms; for he saw as clearly as possible the immense risks which the Emperor was running by holding out for the frontier of the Rhine, and throwing all on the hazard of arms to obtain it; and represented in the most urgent, though respectful terms, the necessity of bending to the force of circumstances, and accepting the monarchy of Louis XIV. as the price of pacifying Europe.[1]*

[1] Lond. 277. Burgh. 155, 158. Fain, 302.

31. Napoleon resolutely holds out for war, in opposition to Caulaincourt's advice.

Napoleon, however, was inexorable: all the efforts of his diplomatist, after the plenary powers he had granted during the alarm after the battle of la Rothière had been recalled on the 17th of February, not only failed in convincing him of the necessity of descending from his ideas, but even of extracting from him any definite statement of the terms on which he himself was willing to come to an accommodation. His genius, essentially

* "The question about to be decided is so important—it may have at the instant consequences so fatal, that I regard it as a paramount duty to recur again, even at the risk of displeasing your Majesty, to what I have already so frequently insisted on. There is no weakness, sire, in my opinion; but I see the dangers which menace France and the throne of your Majesty, and I conjure you to prevent them. We must make sacrifices; we must do so immediately: as at Prague, if we do not take care, the opportunity of doing so will escape us; the circumstances of this moment bear a closer resemblance to those which there occurred than your Majesty may be aware. At Prague peace was not concluded, and Austria declared against us, because we would not believe that the term fixed for the closing of the congress would be rigorously adhered to. Here the negotiations are on the eve of being broken off, because you cannot believe that a question of such immense importance may depend on such or such an answer which we may make before a certain day. The more I consider what has passed, the more I am convinced that, if we do not go into the *contreprojets* demanded, but insist upon modifications on the basis of Frankfort, all is closed. I venture to say, because I feel, that neither the glory of your Majesty nor the power of France depend on the possession of Antwerp, or any other point of our new frontiers."—CAULAINCOURT *to* NAPOLEON, *Châtillon, 6th March* 1814. FAIN, 301, 302; *Pièces Just.*

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Italian in this particular, signally displayed itself in the dexterity with which at this crisis he contrived to evade the repeated and earnest request of Caulaincourt for a categorical statement of the terms on which he was willing to come to an accommodation. He was evidently determined to cast all on the decision of the sword, and impressed with the belief that his genius, or his star, would extricate him from his present, as they had done from so many other perilous circumstances.* War, in consequence, recommenced with more activity than ever: the armistice of Lusigny, even in its application to the operations of the Grand Army, to which it was expressly confined, proved little more than a shadow; while by a singular contrast, characteristic of the manners of modern Europe, the most polished forms of courtesy were observed at the congress of Châtillon. The choicest wines of the Rhone and Champagne, the most delicate viands of Paris, passed as if by enchantment through the French lines, to enrich the diplomatic dinners, which succeeded each other without ceasing. The Allied plenipotentiaries strove, by the most delicate attentions to M. Caulaincourt, to assuage, for a few moments at least, the overwhelming anxiety with which he was oppressed; and French ladies of rank and beauty added the charm of female fascination to the assembly of hostile diplomatists, intent on the overthrow of their country.[1]

[1] Lond. 277, 278. Burgh, 155, 162. Hard. xii. 356, 359. Fain, 302, 303.

* "Pendant ces négociations (à Châtillon) je ne conçois pas comment je ne suis pas devenu fou. Le temps des illusions était passé. L'actualité était dévorante; *et à mes lettres je ne recevais que des réponses évasives,* alors qu'il eut fallut traiter à tout prix. L'avenir nous restait: à présent il ne nous reste qu'un tombeau. Mes lettres n'étaient qu'une pâle copie de ce que je disais à l'Empereur dans nos entretiens particuliers. J'insistais pour qu'il me donnât son ultimatum sincère, afin que je fusse en mésure de terminer invariablement avec les plénipotentiaires alliés, qui avaient reçu certainement des instructions positives. Il me faut être vrai, car ceci est devenu de l'histoire: *L'Empereur ne répondait jamais catégoriquement à cette demande.* Il éludait, avec une merveilleuse adresse, de livrer le secret de sa pensée intime; cette manière est un des traits saillants de son genre d'esprit."—*Souvenirs de* CAULAINCOURT, i. 302, 329, 330.

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While this important negotiation was going on at Châtillon, military operations of the most active kind had been resumed between Napoleon in person and the army of Silesia, which had now, under the direction of Blucher, advanced beyond la Ferté-sous-Jouarre, and almost to Meaux, in the direction of Paris. Napoleon was no sooner informed of the danger which menaced the capital than he set out, as already mentioned,[1] at daybreak on the morning of the 27th February, from Troyes, for Arcis-sur-Aube and Sézanne, to follow on the traces of the Prussian marshal. Blucher on the 25th had crossed the Aube at Anglure, and on the two following days advanced, driving Marmont before him, to la Ferté-sous-Jouarre, where the French marshal effected his junction with Mortier, who had retired from the neighbourhood of Soissons before the approaching corps of Winzingerode and Bulow, now moving forward to co-operate with the army of Silesia, in conformity with the plan agreed on at Bar-sur-Aube on the 25th.[2] The light troops of the Russians were directed by Blucher to make an attack on Meaux ; while, to deceive the enemy as to his real intentions, the Prussians were ordered to repair the bridges over the Marne, at la Ferté-sous-Jouarre, which had been burned by the French, and, crossing over, to menace the French marshal on that side.[3]

32. Advance of Blucher towards Meaux.

Atlas, Plate 93.

[1] *Ante*, ch. lxxxvi. § 6.

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[2] *Ante*, ch. lxxxvi. § 5.

[3] Plotho, iii. 265, 269. Fain, 141, 142. Koch, i. 358. Dan. 201. Valentine, ii. 131.

In pursuance of these orders, Sacken's light troops took possession, with little resistance, of that part of Meaux which is situated on the left bank of the Marne ; but, at the very time that he was making preparations to force his passage across to that part of the town which is on the right bank, Marmont and Mortier, who were too experienced to be diverted from the decisive point of the Paris road by the feint at la Ferté-sous-Jouarre, arrived in breathless haste, and instantly manning the old walls, which had been deserted by the national guard who formed the garrison of the town, made every preparation

33. Which is partly occupied and abandoned by his troops.

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for a vigorous defence. Their opportune arrival obliged Sacken to defer his attack till the following morning; and in the course of the night Blucher received intelligence from Tettenborn that the French Emperor in person was marching on his rear by Sézanne. He immediately drew off his troops, and moved next day in the direction of Soissons, with a view to unite with Winzingerode and Bulow, and give battle to Napoleon. It was full time he should be interrupted in his career, for three days more would have brought him to the gates of the capital, where the roar of Sacken's cannon, during the attack on Meaux, was distinctly heard.[1]

[1] Dan. 201, 202. Koch, i. 358, 360. Fain, 141, 142. Plotho, iii. 265, 271.

34. Combat at Bar-sur-Aube. Feb. 27.

The departure of Napoleon from Troyes was soon made known to the outposts of the grand Allied army, by the languor and inactivity with which their rearguard was pursued. This, coupled with the intelligence which Schwartzenberg received at the same time, of the advance of Blucher towards the Marne, induced him, at the earnest request of the King of Prussia, who was justly alarmed for that general when the whole weight of Napoleon was directed against him, to resume the offensive on the great road from Troyes to Chaumont. With this view, early on the morning of the 27th, the corps of Wrede and Wittgenstein, mustering about thirty-five thousand sabres and bayonets, were drawn up opposite to Bar-sur-Aube on the road leading to Chaumont. Oudinot commanded the French in that quarter, who, though consisting nominally of two corps of infantry and two of cavalry, could not bring above seventeen thousand men into the field; so that the Allies were more than two to one. The French, nevertheless, made a gallant defence. They were skilfully posted across several ravines, which descend from Bar towards the Aube, in such a manner that they could be reached only along the plateaus which lay between them, where, the ground being narrow, the superiority of

the attacking force was not likely to be so severely felt. Wittgenstein's plan was to attack the enemy in front with Gortschakoff's corps, while Prince Eugene of Würtemberg, supported by Pahlen's horse, menaced their flank. The French, however, commenced the action by storming the height in front of Ailleville, which formed the connecting point between their front and flank attack. Upon this, Wittgenstein ordered up Gortschakoff's corps, supported by Pahlen's cuirassiers, to retake that important position. The cavalry were repulsed; but, after a severe struggle, the Russian infantry succeeded in regaining the height. Upon this turning point being gained, a general attack along the whole Allied line took place. Meanwhile Pahlen's cuirassiers had been detached towards Sévigny, in order to threaten the enemy's communications, and thus Gortschakoff's men were exposed, without adequate support, to the furious charge of Kellermann's dragoons. These splendid troops, just arrived from Spain, speedily routed the Russian hussars, and threw their whole centre into such disorder, that Wittgenstein could only avert total defeat by concentrating his artillery at the menaced point. He consequently sent orders, in haste, to Pahlen to remeasure his steps, and bring up his heavy squadrons to the support of the wavering part of the line.[1]

[1] Koch, ii. 1, 8. Burgh. 165, 166. Dan. 179, 180. Fain, 143. Plotho, iii. 240, 243. Vold. iv. 8, 146. Die Grosse Chron. iii. 437, 440.

35. Victory of the Allies.

Highly excited by this brilliant success, the veteran Peninsular squadrons threw themselves, with the utmost gallantry, on the Russian batteries in the centre; but the experienced gunners allowed them to approach within a hundred paces, and then opened such a tremendous point-blank discharge of grape, that four hundred horsemen were in a few minutes stretched on the plain, and the remainder recoiled in disorder. At the same time Schwartzenberg, who had come up in person, ordered two brigades of cavalry and one of infantry from Wrede's corps to support the centre; and, conceiving that part of the line now adequately secured, sent orders to Pahlen to wheel about a second time and resume his original march

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to Sévigny and Dolancourt, to threaten the enemy's left flank. Shortly after, Wrede, who had now come into action, commenced a vigorous attack on Bar-sur-Aube itself, on the French right, so that both their flanks were menaced. These movements of necessity compelled Oudinot to retire; but, to gain time to effect his retreat in order, his troops made the most vigorous resistance at all points, especially at Bar, which was the theatre of a most sanguinary conflict. Pahlen's brilliant dragoons, who had been kept marching and counter-marching all day without taking any part in the combat, did not arrive in time to molest the passage of the Aube at Dolancourt; and thus the French effected their retreat before nightfall without being deprived of either guns or standards; but they sustained a loss of three thousand men, of whom five hundred were prisoners. The Allied loss was about two thousand four hundred men; but they gained Bar-sur-Aube, and, what was of far more consequence, restored the credit and spirit of the Grand Army, and arrested a retreat to the Vosges mountains, or possibly to the Rhine.[1]

[1] Vaud. ii. 75, 80. Koch, 1, 8, 11. Burgh. 160, 161. Dan. 179, 180. Plotho, iii. 241, 244. Die Grosse Chron. iii. 440, 444. Vold. iv. 8, 15.

36. Wound of Wittgenstein.

Count Wittgenstein was severely wounded, Prince Schwartzenberg slightly, in this action; and the former being obliged to retire for a season from active operations, was succeeded in the command of his corps by General Raeffskoi. Except for his loss, the Russian service would have had no cause to lament any circumstance which brought the indomitable hero of Smolensko[2] more prominently forward; but the wound which compelled Wittgenstein to withdraw was a serious injury to the Allied cause, and a great misfortune to himself; for it occurred at the most critical period of the contest, and four weeks more would have shown the saviour of St Petersburg the dome of the Invalides. Though the jealousy of the Russian troops at a foreigner, and the ill success which attended his arms when acting as generalissimo at Lützen,[3] prevented his being invested with

[2] *Ante*, ch. lxxii. § 42.

[3] Dan. 181. Die Grosse Chron. iii. 445.

the supreme command, in the later stages of the war, he throughout bore a distinguished part in its achievements, and contributed much by the boldness of his advice to sustain, when it was greatly required, the vigour of the Allied councils.

37. His character.

Daring, impetuous, often inconsiderate, he was the Marcellus, if Barclay de Tolly was the Fabius, of the Russian army. Like Blucher, he was ever urgent to advance, and uniformly supported the most daring measures; in action, his buoyant courage never failed to bring him into the foremost ranks, and his frequent wounds attest how fearlessly he shared the dangers of the meanest soldiers. He could not be said to be a great master of strategy, and his want of circumspection in adequately supporting his advanced columns frequently exposed his troops to serious reverses, of which the combat at Nangis had recently afforded an example;[1] yet was this very peculiarity of his temperament, directing, as he did, troops so firm and resolute as the Russians, often of the most essential service to his country, and the general cause of Europe. His obstinate resistance and unconquerable vigour on the Dwina, unquestionably saved St Petersburg during the first part of the campaign of 1812; his daring advance against Napoleon's right at Lützen all but exposed that great conqueror to total defeat; and his able retreat at Bautzen snatched complete victory from his grasp when it was almost already seized. The alacrity and fidelity with which, in subordinate situations, he subsequently conducted his own corps, both in 1813 and 1814, proved that his patriotism was superior to all unworthy considerations of jealousy; while his last achievement in the campaign of Bar-sur-Aube, for which he was made a field-marshal, had the most important effect in reviving the spirit of the Grand Army, and restoring vigour and unanimity to the Allied councils.[2]

[1] *Ante*, ch. lxxxv. § 76.

[2] Dan. 181, 182.

Although, however, the successful result of this battle

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sufficiently proved that Napoleon, with the main body of his army, was absent, and that a thin curtain of troops alone stood in front of the Grand Army, yet it was impossible at first to infuse an adequate degree of resolution into its direction. The retiring columns of Oudinot were hardly at all pursued; Prince Schwartzenberg assigned as a reason, that he could not move forward till he was informed of the direction and tendency of Macdonald's corps, which was advancing near Vandœuvres. This corps, however, proved so weak that it was met and repulsed by the cavalry alone of Count Pahlen and Prince Eugene of Würtemberg; and intelligence having been received on the 1st March that Napoleon, with the main body of his forces, was at Arcis-sur-Aube on the preceding day, following fast on Blucher's traces, it became evident that the plan of the campaign agreed on at Bar-sur-Aube, on the 25th February, could no longer be adhered to, and he was in a manner forced into more vigorous operations.

38. Schwartzenberg at length advances.

March 1. On the same day that this information was received from the army of Silesia, a grand reconnoissance with the cavalry took place towards Vandœuvres, and it was ascertained that the enemy were in force in no direction. Orders were at length given for a general advance. Headquarters were, on the day following, moved to Bar-sur-Aube; the retreat was stopped at all points, and preparations were made for attacking the enemy immediately, in the position which he occupied along the Barse, and, if possible, driving him from Troyes. Oudinot and Macdonald, the latter of whom had come up from la-Verte-sur-Aube, had now collected all their forces in that position, and did not appear disposed to relinquish it without a combat.[1]

March 2.

[1] Burgh. 173, 174. Dan. 185, 187. Koch, ii. 13, 21. Plotho, iii. 246, 247. Vaud. ii. 87, 90. Die Grosse Chron. iii. 452, 454.

39. Plan for the combat. March 3.

The attack took place on the 3d, and was maintained, with great vigour at all points. The united French corps which were all under the command of Marshal Macdonald, mustered thirty-five thousand combatants, of which nearly nine thousand were cavalry. The great prepon-

derance of this arm, and the desperate use the French generals had made of it at Bar-sur-Aube, rendered the Allies cautious in their movements; but their great superiority of number made ultimate success a matter of certainty, for they had already sixty thousand men in the field, without bringing up the imperial guards or reserves from the neighbourhood of Chaumont. The position which the French marshal had chosen, strong, and on the elevated plateau of Laubressel, was inaccessible in front and flank in ordinary times, by reason of the morasses with which it was surrounded; but it was by no means equally defensible during the hard frost which had for nearly two months prevailed over all Europe at that time, and which rendered the deepest marshes as easy of crossing as the smoothest plain. Taking advantage of this circumstance, Schwartzenberg directed Wrede to attack the position in front by the great road to Vandœuvres, which passed through it; while Wittgenstein's corps, now under Gortschakoff, second in command to Raeffskoi, assailed it on its left by the plateau of Laubressel, which was to be turned by Prince Eugene of Würtemberg, at the same time.[1]

[1] Die Grosse Chron. iii. 459, 460. Koch, ii. 20, 23. Dan. 187. Burgh. 174.

40. Defeat of the French at la Guillotière. Feb. 3.

At three o'clock the signal was given by the discharge of two guns from Wrede's corps, and the troops all advanced to the attack. Hardly were the first rounds of artillery fired, when, seeing that Prince Eugene's movement was rapidly turning them, the French on the extreme left began to retreat. The Russian cuirassiers under Pahlen instantly dashed forward, and broke two battalions which had not time to form square; and, passing on, attacked a park of artillery which was just entering Troyes, dispersed the drivers, and took the greater part of the guns. General Gerard, who lay sick among the carriages, was only saved from being made prisoner by the intrepidity of a few sappers, who came up to his rescue. Upon this, Count St Germain's dragoons were brought forward, and these admirable troops, charging home, not only

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checked Pahlen's men, already blown by their success, but retook several of the guns. Soon, however, the deep and heavy masses of the Allied infantry arrived in line, each column preceded by a formidable array of artillery. Gerard, who commanded the centre, seeing he was certain of being turned if he remained where he was, soon gave orders for a retreat, and the plateau of Laubressel, the key of the position, was abandoned. Schwartzenberg, perceiving that the retreat was commencing, ordered Wrede with his Bavarians to storm the bridge of la Guillotière over the Barse, which was done in the most brilliant style, and rendered the position accessible in front at all points. The French now retreated on all sides, and after sustaining, with various success, repeated charges of the Allied horse, withdrew wholly into Troyes, which they abandoned next day by capitulation, having in this action suffered a loss of nine pieces of cannon and two thousand men, of whom fifteen hundred were made prisoners; while the Allies had not to lament the loss, in all, of more than eight hundred.[1]

March 4. [1] Plotho, iii. 249, 251. Koch, ii. 26, 29. Vaud. ii. 91, 95. Dan. 187, 188. Burgh. 175, 176. Die Grosse Chron. iii. 463, 465.

41. Extraordinary inactivity of the Grand Army after these successes.

Everything now conspired to recommend vigorous operations to the Grand Army. Its credit was restored, and its spirit revived, by the successful issue of the two last actions; its retreat had been arrested, and turned into a victorious advance; the ancient capital of Champagne had again fallen into its hands; Napoleon was absent, and the troops opposed to it, dejected and downcast, were hardly a third of its own numerical amount. By simply advancing against an enemy in no condition to oppose any resistance to such an operation, Paris would be menaced, the pressure on Blucher removed, the circle of operations narrowed, and the Emperor at length compelled to fight for his dominions and crown, against the united force of both armies, under the very walls of his capital. To complete the reasons for vigorous hostilities, the negotiations for an armistice at Lusigny were broken off on the very day on which Troyes was retaken, Count Flahault's

March 4.

propositions on that subject being deemed wholly inadmissible by the Allied powers. The Emperor Alexander and Lord Castlereagh were indefatigable in their efforts, after this period, to rouse the Austrian commander-in-chief to more active operations, so loudly called for, not more by the obvious advantage to be gained, than by the not less obvious danger to the army of Silesia to be averted by immediately commencing them.* But all their efforts were in vain ; for the next fortnight, big, as we shall immediately see, with the most important events between the Aisne and the Marne, the Grand Army—fully eighty thousand strong, even after the two corps sent to Lyons had been deducted, flushed with victory, within six days' march of the capital, with only thirty thousand enemies in its front—remained in a state of almost total inaction, leaving the destinies of Europe to hang on the swords, comparatively equally balanced, of Napoleon and Marshal Blucher![1]

[1] Koch, ii. 34, 35. Plotho, iii. 251, 252. Dan. 190. Burgh. 176. Die Grosse Chron. iii. 472, 476.

42. The diplomatic caution of the Austrian cabinet, from a wish to save Napoleon, occasioned this.

On the 5th, indeed, headquarters were advanced to Troyes ; the French marshals retired, as Napoleon had done a month before, behind the Seine, and were posted at Bray, Nogent, and Montereau, with the headquarters at Provins ; the victorious corps of Wrede, Prince Eugene of Würtemberg, and Wittgenstein, now under Raeffskoi, were advanced to Sens, and Pont-sur-Yonne ; and the Russian reserves were brought up from Chaumont to the neighbourhood of Montiérender. But in these posi-

* "The Emperor considers that the advance of the Grand Army to Sens is drawing us away from the enemy, and that it is therefore indispensable to direct all our forces to the right towards Arcis, between that town and Vitry ; and, at all events, to reinforce them with the reserves, which should be ordered to move forward."—ALEXANDER *to* SCHWARTZENBERG, 8*th March* 1814. "In consequence of intelligence received from Field-Marshal Blucher, the Emperor considers it indispensable to begin to move by the right, between Arcis-sur-Aube and Vitry."—ALEXANDER *to* SCHWARTZENBERG, 11*th March* 1814. —"I hasten to communicate to your Highness the reports received from Count St Priest. His Majesty has charged me to inform you that, according to his opinion, it is now more necessary than ever to act on the offensive. Henceforth your hands will be completely unbound, and you may act according to military calculation."—VOLKONSKY, *Alexander's Aide-de-camp*, to SCHWARTZENBERG, 12*th March* 1814 ; DANILEFSKY, 194, 195.

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tions they were kept wholly inactive till the 13th, when, in consequence of the great successes of the army of Silesia, a forward movement, though with the usual caution of Schwartzenberg, was attempted. But the Austrian generalissimo is not responsible for this, on military principles, inexplicable delay. Diplomacy here, as so often during the war, restrained the soldiers' arms; and the cabinet of Vienna, distracted between its desire to reduce France to the frontiers of 1792, and yet to preserve the throne for the grandson of the Emperor Francis, still clung to the hope that, by delaying to bring matters to extremities, Napoleon might be brought to see his situation in its true light, and conclude a peace on such terms as might still leave his dynasty on the throne.[1]

[1] Burgh. 176, 179. Koch, ii. 34, 39. Plotho, iii. 251, 258. Dan. 190, 194. Die Grosse Chron. iii. 476, 481.

43. Retreat of Blucher to Soissons. March 2.

Very different, however, was the system of warfare which was pursued on the banks of the Aisne, where Blucher, with the iron bands of the army of Silesia, singly withstood the whole weight of Napoleon's power. No sooner did the veteran marshal receive intelligence of the Emperor's approach, than, with all imaginable expedition, he gathered together his forces, which now amounted to fifty-five thousand men,[2] and forthwith commenced his march across the Marne, at la Ferté-sous-Jouarre, the bridges of which he broke down, in the direction of Soissons. Napoleon, counting the moments in his impatience, urged on the advance of his troops from la Ferté-Gaucher; the soldiers, in high spirits and burning with ardour, gallantly seconded his efforts, and fifty thousand men, pressing on with ceaseless march, promised soon to bring on a fearful collision with the enemy. But it was too late. As the leading columns reached the heights above la Ferté-sous-Jouarre, and the valley of the Marne lay at their feet, they beheld the rearguard of the army of Silesia vanishing in the distance on the other side of the Marne, the whole bridges of which were broken down. It was necessary to restore them before the pursuit could be renewed, and this required four-and-

[2] Claus. vii. 419. Die Grosse Chron. iii. 384.

twenty hours. Headquarters, therefore, were established at la Ferté-sous-Jouarre, and Napoleon in person repaired the following morning to the spot, to hasten the reconstruction of the bridges, at which the engineers laboured with such assiduity that the troops began to cross over on the evening of the same day. Meanwhile couriers were despatched to Paris to tranquillise the inhabitants, whom the cannonade at Meaux had thrown into the utmost consternation, with the joyful intelligence of the retreat of the Allies ; while Blucher, who proposed to fight at Oulchy, on the right bank of the Ourcq, and had given orders to Winzingerode and Bulow to meet him there for that purpose, toiled on amidst dreadful rains, and by deep cross roads rendered almost impassable by the sudden breaking up of the frost, to gain the appointed place of rendezvous.[1]

[1] Dan. 203, 204. Fain, 144, 147. Koch, i. 368, 370. Plotho, iii. 275, 281. Die Grosse Chron. iii. 553, 557.

44. Perilous situation of Blucher, from Soissons holding out. March 2.

It was not so easy a matter as the Prussian general supposed, for Bulow and Winzingerode to get across to Oulchy ; for the only bridge over the Aisne, at this time flooded by the thaw, was at Soissons, and it was a fortified town held by a considerable French garrison. The justice of the *coup-d'œil* which had made Chernicheff some weeks before select it as the scene of his brilliant assault, was now manifest ; but the whole fruits of that success had been lost, and the town regained to the enemy, from the retreat consequent on the disasters of Blucher's army. Bulow and Winzingerode, in obedience to the orders sent them from Bar-sur-Aube on the 25th had united on the 2d near Soissons, on the opposite side of the river : their forces amounted to fifty thousand veterans, so that they would double the numerical strength of the army of Silesia. But Soissons held out, notwithstanding repeated summonses to surrender ; the strength of its works, which had been considerably increased since Chernicheff's extraordinary *coup-de-main*, seemed to defy an immediate assault ; and yet the situation of Blucher, on the opposite bank, with Marmont and Mortier pressing on his rear—

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with the former of whom his rearguard had that day a severe encounter, which cost him five hundred men—and Napoleon threatening his flank, was extremely perilous. In this emergency the Prussian marshal sent forward the pontoon train to Busancy on the Aisne, with the most experienced engineers in his army, to select points for throwing bridges across; but to attempt such an operation during the darkness of a winter night, with fifty thousand French, led by Napoleon, thundering in pursuit, was obviously attended with no common hazard.[1]

[1] Dan. 204, 205. Fain, 147, 149. Koch, i. 373, 374. Plotho, iii. 280, 283.

45. Capitulation of Soissons extricates him from his difficulties.

In this dilemma, the Prussian marshal was delivered from his difficulties in a way so remarkable that it almost savoured of the marvellous. There were fifteen hundred Poles in Soissons, the brave but now inconsiderable remnant of the followers of Poniatowski, under the command of General Moreau.* They had received special orders from Napoleon to defend the place to the last drop of their blood, as the blocking up that issue to the army of Silesia out of the country between the Marne and the Aisne, formed a part of the able plan which he had conceived for its destruction. The Allied generals had resolved to attempt to storm the place on the following morning; but during the night, under the pretence of purchasing some wine for the use of the generals, they sent an officer into the town to propose a capitulation. This skilful diplomatist, Colonel Lowernstown, having with some difficulty, and not without sustaining great danger from the sentries, who repeatedly fired upon him, contrived to make his way into the fortress, so worked upon the fears of the governor, by representing that two strong corps were prepared to assault the place on the following morning, and would infallibly put the whole garrison to the sword, that he prevailed on that officer and the council of war, whom he found assembled, to capitulate. Moreau proposed that the garrison should be allowed to

* Not of course the great general of the same name, who fell at Dresden.

take the guns, six in number, with them; and, after some feigned opposition on the part of Lowernstown, this was admitted. Winzingerode gladly acceded to the proposed terms; and it having been observed by some one present, that it was unusual to give an enemy, voluntarily evacuating a fortress, more than two guns, Woronzoff justly remarked—"that in the present circumstances, the surrender of Soissons was of such importance, that it would be even allowable to make the French commandant a present of some of our own guns, on the single condition of his evacuating the fortress on the instant." The capitulation was accordingly agreed to, and Woronzoff in person led his troops, immediately after, at noon on the 3d, to take possession of the city gates.[1]

[1] Dan. 207, 209. Plotho, iii. 283, 284. Koch, i. 374, 376. Vaud. ii. 15, 16. Die Grosse Chron. iii. 556, 558.

Napoleon expressed, as well he might, the utmost indignation at this disgraceful capitulation; the moment he received intelligence of it, he directed the governor, Moreau, to be forthwith delivered over to a military commission. The importance of the advantage thus gained to the Allies was soon apparent; for hardly were the city gates in possession of the Russians, when the sound of Marmont's and Mortier's cannon was heard thundering on Blucher's rearguard; and soon after the heads of his columns, weary and jaded, and in great confusion, began to arrive, and they defiled without intermission through the fortress all night. It may fairly be concluded, therefore, that the opportune surrender of Soissons saved the Prussian marshal, if not from total defeat, which the distance at which the great body of Napoleon's forces still were rendered improbable, at least from most serious embarrassment and loss in crossing the river. On the day following, the whole army passed over in safety, and effected its junction with Bulow and Winzingerode's men, on the summit of the plateau overlooking Soissons, on the road to Laon. The veterans of the Silesian army, almost worn out with two months' incessant marching and six weeks of active hostilities,

46. Junction of Blucher's army with Winzingerode and Bulow.

March 3.

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with hardly any shoes on their feet, tattered greatcoats on their backs, and almost empty caissons, presented a striking contrast to the splendid array, untarnished uniforms, and well-replenished artillery and baggage-waggons of Bernadotte's corps. This important junction raised the strength of the united army to a hundred thousand men, of whom twenty-four thousand were admirable horse; and infantry and cavalry alike were tried veteran troops, well known in the preceding campaign on the Elbe. Blucher resolved no longer to retreat, but to give battle on the summit of the elevated plateaus which lie between the Aisne and the Serre, adjacent to the highway from Soissons to Laon.[1]

[1] Vaud. ii. 17, 25. Koch, i. 376, 379. Dan. 210, 211. Plotho, iii. 285. Claus. vii. 437.

47. Napoleon's decrees calling on the French people to rise *en masse*. March 5.

And now an event occurred which throws an important light on the moral government of the world, and illustrates the inexpedience, even for present interests, of those deviations from the rules of justice and humanity, which it is the highest glory of civilisation to have in general introduced into the ruthless code of war. Irritated at the escape of the army of Silesia from the well-laid scheme which he had devised for its destruction, and anxious to engage the masses of the people, hitherto passive and inert in the midst of the hostile armies, in a guerilla warfare on the flanks and rear of the invaders, Napoleon issued two proclamations from Fismes: by the first of which he not only authorised, but enjoined, every Frenchman to take up arms, and fall on the flanks and rear of the invading armies; while, by the second, the penalties of treason were denounced against every mayor or public functionary who should not stimulate, to the utmost of his power, the prescribed insurrectionary movements on the part of the people.* Thus was Napoleon himself

* "All the French citizens are not only authorised to take up arms, *but required to do so;* to sound the tocsin as soon as they hear the cannon of our troops approaching them; to assemble together, scour the woods, break down the bridges, block up the roads, and fall on the flanks and rear of the enemy. Every French citizen taken by the enemy, who shall be put to death, shall be forthwith avenged, by the shooting of a prisoner from the enemy.—NAPOLEON."

driven by a just retribution, and the consequences of the atrocious system of univeral invasion and systematic oppression which the Revolutionary armies had so long pursued, to adopt the very same measures of defence which he had so often denounced in his enemies, and for obeying which he had, in sullen revenge, shed so much noble and heroic blood.[1]

[1] Moniteur, March 6, 1814.

The guerilla warfare to which he now called the French, and which led to severe and sanguinary proclamations, in reprisal, by the Allied generals, was no other than the very system for pursuing which he had, in the outset of his career, shot the magistrates and principal citizens of Pavia in cold blood, and given up that beautiful city to pillage;[2] and to repress which he had sanctioned the bloody proclamations of Soult[3] and Augereau,[4] denouncing the punishment of death against every Spanish peasant found in arms in defence of his country; and the still more infamous decree of Bessières, affixing the same penalty, not only to the people not soldiers taken in arms, but "against the *fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, children, and nephews*, of all individuals who have quitted their domiciles, and do not inhabit the villages occupied by the French."[5] Impelled by stern necessity, the mighty conqueror was now obliged to sign with his own hand the condemnation of his previous cruelty; to canonise the memory of the many brave men whom he had doomed to death for doing what he now enjoined; to expose to similar suffering the people who had been the instruments and sharers in his oppression. Providence has a clear mode of dealing with the sins of men, which is, to leave them to the consequences of their own iniquities.

43. Which was the very thing he had so often denounced in his enemies.

[2] *Ante*, ch. xx. § 85.
[3] May 9, 1810.
[4] Dec. 28, 1809.
[5] June 6, 1811.

Determined to come to blows with the army of Silesia,

"All the mayors, public functionaries, and inhabitants, who, instead of stimulating the patriotic ardour of the people, shall strive to cool them, and dissuade them from all the measures of a legitimate defence, shall be *considered as traitors, and treated as such*."—NAPOLEON, *5th March* 1814. *Moniteur, March* 6, 1814; and GOLDSMITH'S *Recueil*, vi. 645.

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notwithstanding the great accession of strength which it had just received, in the hopes that he might disable it for a time, at least, from resuming the offensive, while he turned his strength against the vast but unwieldy masses of the Grand Army, Napoleon gave orders for a general advance. With this view, General Corbineau, with a considerable body, was detached in the night of the 4th from Fismes to Rheims, of which he took possession without resistance on the day following; and on the same day the advanced guard was pushed on to Bery-au-Bac, where the cross road from Rheims to Laon passes the Aisne, by a bridge recently constructed. The whole army was immediately moved in that direction; and Nansouty, having fallen in with the rearguard of the enemy, drove it back to Corbeny with some loss. As soon as the passage of the Aisne was fully effected, couriers were despatched to Mezières, Verdun, and Metz, with instructions to stimulate the authorities to rouse the peasantry; but though the latter in many places showed a disposition to rise in obedience to the Emperor's proclamations, and not unfrequently fell upon the detached parties of the Allies with hardly any leaders, yet the former, foreseeing his approaching end, hardly ever made the slightest attempt either to direct or encourage their efforts. Meanwhile the army approached Laon, by the road from Bery-au-Bac, to the ground where Marshal Blucher had taken post on the plateau of CRAONE, on the narrow neck of land which extends from the road from Soissons to Laon, to which the enemy were now advancing from Bery-au-Bac to the same town.[1]

49. Napoleon crosses the Aisne, and follows Blucher to Craone.

March 5.

[1] Koch, i. 388, 391. Dan. 217. Fain, 154, 155. Die Grosse Chron. iii. 564, 565.

50. Description of the field of battle.

Atlas, Plate 97.

The position thus chosen was a plateau nearly a mile and a half long, but not half a mile broad, bounded on either flank by steep slopes leading down to the ravines of Foulon and Ailles, the sides of which, difficult of ascent to infantry, were wholly impracticable for cavalry or artillery. The river Lette flowed nearly in a straight line, in the bottom of the ravine to the north; at the

distance of a mile from the southern edge of the plateau, the Aisne ran in a deep and nearly parallel channel, from east to west; but the immediate declivities of the position were drained by a multitude of feeders, which flowed rapidly down at right angles to the central bed of these two streams. A cross gully of no great depth, but a most formidable obstacle on a field of battle, extended at right angles to the ravines, along the front of that part of the plateau which Woronzoff chose for his first stand; and two others of irregular forms, running each halfway across it, afforded, like so many bastions and ditches, positions of considerable strength in rear. The upper part of the hollows on either side was filled with woods; that of Vauclere lying to the north, and the Bois de Blanc Sablon to the south, neither of which was pervious to cavalry or artillery. The neck of the plateau, and the strength of the position, was across it from Ailles to Paissy, and at that point it was little more than five hundred yards broad—a narrow space for a battle to be fought on which the fate of France, and perhaps of Europe, would depend.[1]

[1] Personal observation. Koch, i. 389, 390. Vaud. ii. 31, 32. Plotho, iii. 288, 289. Beauchamp, i. 395.

51. Blucher's dispositions.

It was far from being his whole army, however, which Blucher had assembled in this strong position. His situation was full of difficulty, especially considering the sudden and desperate strokes which his antagonist was wont to deliver, the admirable quality of the troops at his command, and the variety of points he himself was called on to defend. It was necessary, in case of disaster, and for the sake of his communications, to cover Laon, the bulwark of the roads to the Netherlands: to defend the central position at Craone, and, at the same time, to keep possession of the important fortress of Soissons, commanding the principal passage of the Aisne, and the great road to Paris, the object of all his efforts. This last stronghold, forming the extreme right of his line, was now threatened with immediate assault by Marmont and Mortier, to whom Napoleon had given peremptory orders

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instantly to carry it at all hazards. To provide at once for these different objects, and at the same time carry into effect his intention of giving battle to the French Emperor, the following dispositions were made by Marshal Blucher:—Bulow, with his whole corps, was sent off to defend Laon; the infantry of Winzingerode, under Woronzoff and Strogonoff, were charged with the defence of the plateau of Craone; while Winzingerode, at the head of ten thousand horse, and sixty pieces of horse-artillery, followed by Kleist and Langeron, was to pass the Lette, and by cross roads fall on the right wing or rear of the French, while actively engaged on the plateau in front. York was posted on the highway between Soissons and Laon, to afford succour to any point which might require it; and the defence of Soissons was intrusted to Radzewitz, with six thousand men of Langeron's corps.[1]

[1] Koch, i. 386, 387. Dan. 218. Plotho, iii. 290.

52. Unsuccessful assault on Soissons. March 5.

The first attack was made on this important fortress, the loss of which had been the subject of such unbounded mortification to the Emperor. At daylight on the morning of the 5th, the enemy's troops were seen approaching in deep columns, by the road of Chateau-Thierry. Radzewitz immediately made his preparations, and rode round the ranks, reminding his men of what they owed to their sovereign and the honour of the Russian arms. At seven, the enemy commenced the attack on the faubourgs, but they were repulsed with loss. Returning, however, to the charge, they made themselves masters of a considerable part of the houses beyond the walls, and a desperate action, within pistol-shot, ensued in the streets, near to the foot of the ramparts, which was maintained with the greatest resolution on both sides. Transported with ardour, the French, in many places, unroofed the houses of which they had made themselves masters, hoisted up their guns, with ropes, on the outside, to the topmost story, and from thence, as from the moving towers of antiquity, battered the summit of the walls, nearly on an

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equal footing. But it was all in vain. The Russian grenadiers, with heroic resolution, made good their post against their gallant antagonists, threefold more numerous than themselves; the guns on the bastions maintained their superiority over those of the enemy, somewhat below them, in the suburbs; and after the whole day had been consumed, and fifteen hundred men lost to either side in this furious assault, the French marshal drew off, leaving Radzewitz in possession of the bloodstained ramparts.[1]

[1] Dan. 215. 217. Beauch. i. 391, 392. Vaud. i. 27. Plotho, iii. 286. Die Grosse Chron. iii. 566, 569. Velter, ii. 152.

53. Napoleon's dispositions

Disappointed in his hopes of turning the Allied position by carrying Soissons on its right flank, Napoleon now resolved to hazard a direct attack upon the plateau in its front. Had his army been composed of the soldiers of Arcola or Rivoli, he would have formed his troops into a dense column, and assaulted the Russians on the neck of the narrow tongue of land, as his grenadiers had forced the dykes in the swampy plains of Verona. But, excepting the divisions Friant and Christiani of the Old Guard, with the cuirassiers, they were of a very different description, being in great part conscripts and young troops, almost worn out with the incredible efforts they had already made in the campaign; and who were not always to be relied on except in the presence of the Emperor. In consequence of this, Napoleon felt the necessity of supplying by combination what was wanting in strength; and with this view he made the following dispositions. Ney was charged with the principal attack, which was to be directed against the enemy's left flank, upwards from the slope descending to the valley of the Lette, and he had under his command part of Victor's corps and the dragoons of the Guard; while Nansouty, with the Polish dragoons and Excelmans' division, was to climb the steep on the right of the enemy, from the side of Ouche and the feeders of the Aisne. The main attack along the neck of the plateau, led by Victor, at the head of the infantry of the Guard, was under the direction of Napoleon in person; and by bringing up column after

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column on that narrow plain, he hoped to force the position, despite its natural advantages, when the heads of his columns showed themselves on either flank. His force actually on the field, and engaged with the enemy, amounted to forty thousand men; the Russians were only twenty-seven thousand, ten thousand under Winzingerode having, as already noticed, been detached to Festieux, to threaten the French rear. But the Russians had the advantage of a very strong position, had not been exhausted by previous combats in the campaign, and were the very flower of the Russian army. By a singular chance, the result of the previous movements which had taken place, both parties had passed each other, and now wheeled about to fight; the Russians with their face to the Rhine, the French with theirs towards Paris.[1]

[1] Dan. 219, 222. Koch, i. 389, 391. Vaud. i. 31, 34. Plotho, iii. 289, 290. Kausler, 398, 399. Die Grosse Chron. iii. 570, 571.

54. Commencement of the battle.

Soon after nine o'clock on the morning of the 7th, two of the enemy's columns appeared on the front of the plateau towards Craone, while a third, without guns, entered the ravine on the left. Blucher at the same time received intelligence that Winzingerode's corps of horse-artillery and cannon, which was destined to turn the French flank, and execute the decisive attack, so far from having yet reached Festieux, its place of destination, was still far in the rear, from having been impeded by the excessive badness of the roads. He instantly ordered Kleist's men to take the start of Winzingerode, and press on direct for that place; while he himself set out in person after Winzingerode, to endeavour to overcome the difficulties which impeded him, leaving Sacken on the neck of land to combat Napoleon. The French forces, preceded by a hundred guns, soon approached in dense masses along the plateau. Shortly the fire of artillery became extremely violent on both sides; for the Russian cannon, consisting of sixty pieces, was admirably posted, and kept up a dreadful discharge, with unerring precision, both in front and flank, on the deep French columns

advancing along the neck of the plateau. Napoleon's guns, greatly superior in number, but by no means so advantageously placed, replied with the utmost vigour: their shot, admirably directed, ploughed through the Russian masses, which, drawn up in three lines, almost close together, presented an infallible mark to the gunners. Not a piece was fired without producing a corresponding chasm in the opposite ranks. But nothing could shake the firmness of Woronzoff's troops: whole files were mown down, but the men never wavered, and with the steadiness which discipline superadded to native courage alone can give, calmly fronted the tempest of death in obedience to their Czar and their oaths. At length the attacking columns recoiled in this fearful strife; and Victor's troops, after sustaining a dreadful loss, withdrew beyond reach of the fire.[1]

[1] Kausler, 400. Dan. 223, 224. Koch, i. 391, 392. Vaud. ii. 32, 33. Plotho, iii. 289, 290.

55. Desperate action on the plateau, which at length ends in the Russians retreating.

Meanwhile Ney, on the Russian left, no sooner heard the cannon-shot on the crest of the plateau, than, transported with ardour, he redoubled the vigour of his attack. The hamlet of Ailles was carried after hard fighting; and his tirailleurs, driving the Russian light troops before them, were seen climbing the steep on the left of the plateau. At the same time an attempt was made by Nansouty, with six battalions of infantry, to mount the summit on the right from the side of Ouche. The depth, however, of the ravine on that flank, the badness of the roads, and the well-directed fire of six guns planted on the edge of the plateau, at the top of the declivity, rendered the attack abortive. But no sooner did the Emperor perceive Ney's vanguard appearing on the summit, than he ordered Victor to advance again in a heavy close column along the neck of the position. With such vigour did this column rush forward, supported by Ney's men on their right, in spite of the fire of forty-eight guns on their front and flank, that one of the Russian batteries on the left was carried. It was only a few minutes in the enemy's possession, for the 19th

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light infantry, and regiment of Shirvan, rushed forward and retook it with the bayonet, hurling the French with loud shouts down the steeps. But the extreme rapidity and violence of the fire now caused, after four hours' fighting, a want of ammunition to be felt in the Russian lines; and Sacken, alarmed by the increasing masses of the French, especially in the valley on his left, and the non-appearance of Blucher or Winzingerode in the rear of the enemy where they had been expected, twice sent orders to Woronzoff to retreat. The brave Russian, however, finding he could still make good his post, and wisely judging that he ran less danger by standing still in his strong position and continuing the contest, than by retreating in face of such a force as Napoleon commanded, still maintained his ground. But at length Sacken, having received instructions from Blucher to fall back with all his forces to the central position at Laon, gave Woronzoff positive orders to retreat.[1]

[1] Dan. 223, 224. Koch, i. 393, 396. Kausler, 400. Plotho, iii. 290. Vaud. ii. 33, 35. Die Grosse Chron. iii. 575, 576.

56. Glorious retreat of the Russians.

It was at two o'clock in the afternoon that this hazardous movement commenced. Woronzoff formed his men with admirable steadiness, even under the fire of a hundred French guns, in squares, and ordered the retreat in ordinary time by alternate bodies; the artillery in the openings, and the dismounted guns, two-and-twenty in number, with such of the wounded as could be removed, in front of the retreating column. As soon as Napoleon perceived the retreat commencing, he hurried forward all his guns to his own front, redoubled his fire upon the retiring columns, and ordered up the whole dragoons and cuirassiers to charge along the neck of the plateau. So vehement was their onset, so loud the cries and clatter of the rushing horsemen, that it was at first thought all was lost on the right; but when the smoke cleared away, the steady squares were seen pursuing their march unbroken; and Benkendorff, with the hussars and Cossacks, bravely charged the French horse, and checked the pursuit. As the retreat continued, and the Russians came past the

neck to a wider part of the plateau, the danger became greater, because the more extended surface of the level ground enabled the French cavalry to turn their flanks. At this critical moment, however, Wassiltchikoff came up with Lanskoy's hussars and Dochakoff's dragoons of Sacken's corps. These incomparable troops instantly charged the pursuing horse, and drove them back in their turn. So narrow was the ground in some places, that the horse were obliged to halt and open out, in order to let the infantry and guns through; and instantly closing when they had passed, faced about against the pursuers. Several of the Russian regiments of cavalry charged in this manner, in less than an hour, eight different times.[1]

[1] Dan. 225, 226. Kausler, 400. Vaud. i. 35, 37. Koch, i. 394, 396. Plotho, iii. 290, 291.

57. Strong position taken up by the Russians in the rear.

Meanwhile the Russian troops were approaching the second neck of the plateau, in the rear both of the former and of the wider space between them; and while the cavalry retarded the advance of the enemy, the whole guns of Sacken's and Woronzoff's corps which were not dismounted, sixty-four in number, were placed upon it. The ground was singularly calculated to give efficiency to their fire; for it was at once flanked on either side by perpendicular rocks which could not be scaled, and rose by a steep slope in the narrow isthmus between them, so as to afford the means of placing the cannon in a double row, one behind and the other above, in such a manner that, like the upper and under decks of a ship at sea, they could both discharge at the same time. On this slope the guns were placed; thirty-six in the first line, twenty-eight in the second, opposite to the intervals between the first, and about twenty feet above them. When everything was in readiness, the infantry were marching back slowly, and with perfect regularity, abreast of the first line of guns, when they faced about and dressed in a line with the mouths of the pieces in the lower line, which immediately began to fire with the utmost violence,[2] while the heavy guns in the

[2] Kausler, 401. Dan. 226, 227. Vaud. i. 35. Koch, i. 399. Die Grosse Chron. iii. 578, 579.

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upper tier thundered over their heads. Before this began, the cavalry, now almost worn out, rapidly withdrew to the right and left, and retired behind the artillery.

58. In the assault of which the French are repulsed.

Great was the astonishment of the French when the screen of horsemen cleared away, and they beheld this close mass of enemies ready to receive them. They were nothing daunted, however, by the sight. Drouot formed the terrible artillery of the Guard in front of this second position, and calmly moved on in the midst of the guns, on foot, as he was wont, against the double tier of cannon, sometimes aiding in the pointing of a gun, as in the days of his youth at the military college.* Immediately behind him the lofty grenadier caps of the Imperial Guard were seen in dense and formidable array. But all their efforts were in vain. With dauntless intrepidity, indeed, the Old Guard continued to press on along the narrow ridge; but the thicker their columns became the greater was the havoc, until their advance was literally impeded by the heaps of dead and dying. The Russian artillery, worked with extraordinary rapidity, fired, by alternate guns, round-shot and grape from the first line, and round-shot and grenades from the second; and such was the precision of their aim, that the assailants never succeeded, notwithstanding the most heroic efforts, in passing the dreadful strait. This awful cannonade lasted only twenty minutes; when Drouot, finding the position unassailable, drew off his guns, and the fire ceased. Soon after, Woronzoff, having by this stand gained time for his cavalry, wounded, and carriages, to reach the great road from Soissons, himself followed with the rearguard, and the whole fell back to the environs of Laon.[1]

[1] Dan. 226, 228. Kausler, 401. Plotho, iii. 290, 291. Koch, i. 399, 401. Vaud. i. 35, 37. Die Grosse Chron. iii. 578, 579, 584.

* "Non content d'appuyer ainsi le mouvement du Général Boyer, le Comte Drouot, mettant pied à terre, vint utiliser son artillerie, en montrant aux canonniers la manière de charger et de pointer, avec autant de douceur et de calme que s'il eût été au polygone."—Koch, i. 394.

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59. Results of the battle.

Such was the terrible battle of Craone, the most obstinately contested, if we except Albuera and Culm, of the whole Revolutionary war, and in which it is hard to say to which side of the heroic antagonists the palm of victory is to be awarded. The French were greatly superior in number; for as Sacken's infantry was never engaged, nor even in sight, the whole troops who fought on the Russian side did not exceed twenty-one thousand; while Napoleon had nearly thirty thousand actually under fire.* But this disproportion, great as it was, appears to have been counterbalanced in the result by the incomparable strength of Woronzoff's position, which rendered numerical superiority of little avail, and the admirable disposition of his guns, which, both at the commencement and close of the action, gave the Russian artillery, though inferior in number, a decided advantage over that of the French. Trophies of victory there were none to boast of by either party. The French won the field of battle, but it was covered only with the dead or the dying: no prisoners were made, or cannon or standards taken, on either side; and the field itself was yielded, not to the attacks, impetuous as they were, of Napoleon's grenadiers, but to the general policy of the campaign, which, after Winzingerode's circular march against the French rear had failed, induced the Prussian field-marshal to direct a general concentration of his forces in the noble position of Laon. The loss on both sides was enormous; and, save at Albuera, unprecedented in proportion to the number of troops engaged in the whole war. The Russians were weakened by five thousand killed and wounded; but on the side of the French no less than eight thousand brave men, being more than a fourth of the troops engaged, had fallen.[1] Woronzoff deservedly had the order of St George, of the

[1] Die Grosse Chron. iii. 586. Koch, i. 401, 402. Kausler, 401. Dan. 229. Fain, 158. Vaud. ii. 37. Claus. vii. 440.

| | Infantry. | Cavalry. | Total. |
|---|---|---|---|
| * Russians under fire, | 16,304 | 4,900 | 21,204 |
| French ditto, | 23,073 | 6,350 | 29,423 |

—Koch, i. 391; and *Die Grosse Chron.* iii. 575, 577.

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second class, immediately conferred upon him by a grateful sovereign: wounds and death were the only returns which now remained for French deeds of heroism. Victor was severely lacerated by a cannon-ball in the thigh; Grouchy, Nansouty, Boyer, and two other generals, more slightly.

60. Reflections on this battle, and the extraordinary gallantry displayed.

Had Winzingerode's attack, supported by Kleist, in the rear, not been prevented from taking place by the extraordinary difficulties which impeded his march, Napoleon's career would, in all probability, have been terminated at Craone, as it afterwards was at Waterloo. His last reserves had been engaged on the plateau; he had no troops in hand to oppose to any fresh attack; and the apparition in his rear of ten thousand horse, followed by Kleist and Langeron's corps, would have proved fatal. It cannot be denied that Blucher erred egregiously in dispersing his army so much before the battle; and that, considering that his forces, upon the whole, were double those of his antagonist, it afforded the most decisive proof of his having been out-generaled, or singularly ill-used by fortune, that, at the decisive point, the French so far outnumbered his troops engaged. Proportionally greater was the credit due to the heroism of Woronzoff and his unconquerable soldiers, who overcame all these obstacles, and contended on equal terms, during the whole day, against Napoleon, at the head of such superior forces, including his redoubtable Guards and cuirassiers. Innumerable were the deeds of heroism performed by officers and men on both sides. Ney, Mortier, and Victor combated on foot at the head of their troops, and were always to be seen in the thickest of the fire, animating the troops by their voice and example. Woronzoff repeatedly, during the retreat, threw himself into the squares, and in person gave the word of command to fire, when the French had come within fifty paces: Major-general Poncet, severely wounded, stood before his brigade on crutches,[1] and positively refused to retire till the line was directed to fall

[1] Dan. 229, 232, Koch. i. 301, 302. Claus. vii. 440.

back: the regiment of Shirvan, having exhausted their cartridges, and being surrounded by the French cavalry, thrice forced their way through with fixed bayonets, bringing with them their dead colonel, and all the officers who had been either killed or wounded: Dochakoff, on being mortally wounded, exclaimed to his regiment, "Halt, Courlanders!" and breathed his last.

61. Napoleon on the night succeeding the battle.

The French army, after this terrible battle, separated into two columns, and moved towards Laon. While the cavalry were on the road to Laon, Napoleon traversed in the gloom of the evening the blood-stained summit of the plateau, and then descended into the valley of the Aisne, to seek a hamlet wherein to pass the night, and found it in the village of Bray. His spirits were unusually depressed, as well by the bloody and unsatisfactory issue of the action, as by the intelligence which he received the same evening from Châtillon, announcing the firm determination of the Allies to break up the conference, unless the fundamental principle of reducing France to its ancient limits was agreed to. The Emperor was not prepared for such unanimity on the part of the Allied plenipotentiaries; he still clung to the hope that Austria would break off. He refused, however, to yield to those terms, and a messenger was despatched with instructions to Caulaincourt to present a counter-project, and strive to gain time. "I see clearly," said he, "that this war is an abyss, but I will be the last to bury myself in it. If we must wear the fetters, it is not I who will stretch out my hands to receive them." He was deeply depressed, however, by the issue of the action, and wrote that night to Joseph at Paris—"The Old Guard alone stood firm; the rest melted like snow." Such was his irritation from the desperate state of his affairs, that he gave orders, in one of his fits of fury, to shoot some Russian prisoners, probably in retaliation for some peasants slain;[1] and the

[1] Fain, 159, 161. Koch, i. 401, 403. Dan. 235. Bign. xiii. 271.

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command, before he relented, was unhappily carried into execution at the village of Vaurains.

62. Both parties take post at and around Laon.

On the following day, Blucher collected all his six corps round the splendid position of Laon. So exhausted were the French by their efforts during the battle, that they did not move from their ground till ten next day; and as the Russians marched the whole night, they got the start of the enemy, and reached the neighbourhood of that town in safety. Napoleon also on his side collected his whole forces, which now amounted to about forty-eight thousand men. Marmont, who was ordered up from Soissons, crossed the Aisne at Bery-au-Bac, and, after sleeping at Corbeny, approached Laon by the road of Rheims; while the bulk of the army, consisting of the corps of Ney and Mortier, with the cuirassiers and reserve cavalry, after having joined the great road from Soissons to Laon at Chavignon and Vaurains, approached on the *chaussée* from Paris. Notwithstanding all his losses, Blucher had still nearly ninety thousand men grouped around the hill of Laon; and the approach to the position was by a defile two miles in length, where the road crosses a marsh that runs up to the foot of the hill. Chernicheff was posted at Etouville, which lay at the entrance of this defile, with four regiments of infantry and twenty-four guns; and he defended himself so vigorously against the impetuous attacks of Marshal Ney, who commanded the French advanced guard, that at nightfall he was still unable to make any impression. After it was dark, however, the peasants conducted the Old Guard through by-paths across the marshes; so that, at daybreak on the 9th, Chernicheff found his post at the entrance of the defile no longer tenable, and withdrew with all his forces to the position of Laon.[1] There, soon after, Radzewitz arrived with the garrison of Soissons, having by forced marches and extraordinary vigilance eluded all the efforts of the enemy to intercept him. The accession of these forces, and the general

[1] Dan. 236, 238. Kausler, 402. Fain, 161, 162. Koch, i. 408, 411. Plotho, iii. 292, 293. Vaud. i. 42, 44. Varnh. von Ense, 401. Die Grosse Chron. iii. 592, 593.

concentration of his troops, raised Blucher's army to one hundred and four thousand men, including twenty-four thousand horse, and two hundred and sixty guns, all concentrated and supporting each other: while Napoleon, including Marmont, had only fifty-two thousand, of whom not more than fourteen thousand were cavalry.

63. Description of the position of Laon, and that of the Allied army.

Atlas, Plate 98.

Laon is a town of great antiquity, containing seven thousand souls, and well known to travellers in that part of France. Like that of Cassel on the borders of Flanders, it stands upon the flat summit of a conical hill about three-quarters of a mile in breadth, and elevated nearly two hundred and fifty feet above the adjacent plain. It is surrounded by irregular ancient walls and towers, standing on the edge of the lofty plateau as it sinks into the declivity, and following its varied sinuosities. Gardens, orchards, and grass fields lie on the slopes of this huge truncated cone; the roads leading to the town ascend by a gentle slope up the long acclivity. The houses at the foot, fronting the highways and villages adjacent, were all loopholed, and filled with musketeers; a hundred pieces of cannon crowded the ramparts on the summit, while numerous other batteries crowned every commanding eminence in the adjoining slopes. On these slopes, and in the neighbouring villages, lay the immense host of the Allied army, having the town for a vast redoubt in its centre, and extending with its wings far into the plain on either side. On the right lay Winzingerode's men, drawn up in two lines near Aven; in the centre, Bulow's corps occupied the hill of Laon, the villages of Semilly and Ardon, with the abbey of St Vincent at its foot, and manned the numerous batteries disposed around its slopes. On the left, those of Kleist and York extended from Laon to Chambry, opposite to Athies, and stretched far into the plain on the road leading to Rheims. Sacken's and Langeron's troops, which had suffered so severely in the preceding combats,

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were in reserve behind Laon. The positions of the French, they being fewer in number, were much more concentrated. Marmont was expected on the right, being ordered to come up by the road from Rheims to a spot assigned between Chambry and Athies in the level plain: Mortier, with the Guards, and the whole reserve cavalry under Grouchy and Nansouty, was in the centre; opposite Laon, in front of them, half way to Semilly and Ardon, was Ney with his indefatigable corps, yet reeking with the blood of Craone.[1]

[1] Personal observation. Kausler, 403, 404. Koch, i. 407, 408. Beauchamp, i. 404, 405.

64. Sublime spectacle from the ramparts of Laon. March 8.

It was a sublime and animating sight, when, on the evening of the 8th March, the Allied army withdrew on all sides into the vicinity of this ancient and celebrated town. To the anxious and trembling crowds of citizens, and peasants driven in from the adjacent country which had been the theatre of hostilities, the horizon to the south and west appeared covered by innumerable fires; loud discharges of cannon rolled on all sides, and sensibly approached the town; long lines of light, proceeding from the fire of the infantry of the Allies as they retired, or of the French as they advanced, were distinctly seen as the shades of evening set in. When night approached, and darkness overspread the plain, a still more extraordinary spectacle presented itself. The continued discharges in the midst of the thickets and woods, with which the country abounded, produced a strange optical illusion, which converted the trees into so many electrical tubes, from the summits of which sparks and dazzling light, as from so many fireworks, appeared to rush upwards into the heavens. In the midst of this lurid illumination, long lines of infantry, dark masses of cavalry, and endless files of artillery, were seen covering the plain in all directions, till they were lost in the obscurity of distance.[2]

[2] Témoin Oculaire, in Beauch. i. 405.

The succeeding day, being the 9th, was passed without any serious action on either side. Approached to the villages of Clacy, Semilly, and Ardon, at the foot of the hill of Laon, the centre and left, composed of the troops

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65. Combat on the first day until Marmont arrives. March 9.

under Napoleon in person, were perfectly prepared for an attack. But he was justly unwilling to hazard a general engagement until his right wing, under Marmont, came up to its ground from the side of Rheims ; and repeatedly in the course of the day he despatched messengers in that direction, to learn where the marshal was, and how soon he might be expected in the field. Meanwhile, in order to feel the strength of the enemy's position, Ney was ordered to advance right against Laon by the great road from Soissons. Favoured by a thick fog, which entirely enveloped the hill of Laon, and concealed his advance from the enemy, he succeeded, by a sudden attack, in making himself master of the villages of Semilly and Ardon at the foot of the hill, and was only prevented from pushing up its slopes by the concentric fire of the batteries, which commanded every approach to the town. At eleven the mist cleared away, and the whole field of battle became visible from the ramparts. Blucher, perceiving how inconsiderable were the forces opposed to him in the centre, resolved to resume the offensive, and drive the enemy from the villages he had won at the foot of the hill. With this view, while Woronzoff's infantry were ordered to attack Semilly in front, and Bulow's at Ardon, a division of infantry, supported by all Winzingerode's cavalry, was directed to make a sweep in the plain, and turn their left. This double attack entirely succeeded ; and Ney's corps were driven back across the *chaussée* and marshes towards Etouville, in such disorder, that it was only by charging with the Imperial Guard and reserve cavalry, that that marshal and Belliard succeeded in arresting the pursuit of the Allies, and driving them back to the bottom of the hill. At four in the afternoon, Napoleon having learned that Marmont had come up to his ground on the right, towards Athies on the road to Rheims, brought forward his Guards and cuirassiers, by a vigorous advance again expelled the Allies from Ardon,[1] and carried, after a bloody struggle, the village of Clacy

[1] Kausler, 405, 406. Koch, i. 409, 411. Dan. 239, 240. Vaud. ii. 45, 46. Plotho, iii. 494, 495. Die Grosse Chron. iii. 593, 596.

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66. Arrival of Marmont, and Blucher's measures to overwhelm him.

and the abbey of St Vincent from the Russians on their right.

Neither party, however, were intent on these attacks; both fought only to gain time. Napoleon was counting the minutes, till the announcement of the approach of Marmont warned him that he might with safety commence a real attack upon the enemy at once in front and flank; while Blucher, having received intelligence of the French marshal being expected on the road to Rheims from Laon, was taking measures to fall upon and crush him when he was totally unsupported by the remainder of the army. Meanwhile Marmont, who had begun his march early in the morning from Bery-au-Bac, issued at one in the afternoon from the defile of Festieux, and, driving the Prussian videttes before him, commenced an attack at four o'clock on a division of York's infantry, which was stationed at Athies, and after a fierce combat the Prussians were driven out of the village, which became a prey to the flames. Blucher now clearly perceived, from the vivacity of this assault, that the principal effort of the enemy was to be made in that direction. He saw that Napoleon's design was to amuse him by false attacks in front on the Soissons road, and meanwhile turn his flank, cut him off from all communication with the Grand Army, and throw him back on a separate field of operations on the side of Flanders. He immediately took measures to defeat this project, and convert it into the means of the enemy's ruin; and for this object his central position at Laon, midway as it were between the two wings of the French army, presented extraordinary advantages. Langeron and Sacken were moved up behind Laon to the left, so as to be in a condition to support York: Kleist was ordered up to the front, close in his rear: the horse-artillery of the army of Silesia was moved to the extreme left, so as to be ready to commence the attack: the infantry were all arranged in close columns, the cavalry in dense array of squadrons;[1] and the whole received

[1] Dan. 240, 241. Koch, i. 414. Vaud. ii. 48, 50. Plotho, iii. 294, 295. Die Grosse Chron. iii. 660, 662.

orders to advance, as soon as it was dark, in double quick time, and without firing a shot or uttering a word, against the enemy.

67. Nocturnal surprise and defeat of Marmont.

Meanwhile Marmont's troops, worn out with fatigue, and wholly unconscious of their danger, had sunk to sleep in their frigid bivouacs. At night-fall, when the French were lighting their watchfires, the Prussians in deep array and perfect silence advanced to the attack: Prince William of Prussia led the infantry, which were headed by the brigades of Horn and Klux, and moved by the high-road right on Athies. The fields on either side were filled with the remainder of Kleist's corps, all in close column, so as to occupy very little room; while Ziethen's turned the right flank of the enemy, and drove them back on the infantry. Both attacks proved entirely successful. So complete was the surprise, so universal the consternation, that the French merely fired one round of grape on the approach of Prince William, and then dispersed, every one flying in the profound darkness whither chance or his fears directed.* Ziethen's horse at the same instant falling on the right, increased the confusion: the fugitives from these two attacks, flying at right angles to each other, soon got intermingled, and poured headlong out in frightful disorder on the road to Bery-au-Bac; while the Prussian infantry, pressing on through the throng with loud shouts, soon arrived at the grand park and reserve caissons, all of which, with the exception of a few pieces, were taken. The Prussian hussars, highly elated with their success, continued the pursuit without intermission, and the darkness of the night alone prevented the whole corps being made prisoners. In wild confusion, horse, foot, and the few cannon which had

* "Altri danno alla fuga i piè tremanti;
Danno altri al ferro intrepida la mano:
E la notte i tumulti ognor più mesce;
Ed occultando i rischi, i rischi accresce."
*Ger. Lib.* ix. 26.

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escaped hurried through the defile of Festieux, six miles off, at the entrance of which Colonel Fabvier contrived to rally a few hundred men, who, from the smallness of their number not being perceived in the darkness of the night, contrived to stop the pursuit. As it was, however, Marmont lost forty pieces of cannon, a hundred and thirty-one caissons, and two thousand five hundred prisoners. The number of killed and wounded, from the rapidity of the flight, was not considerable; but his corps was totally dispersed, and disabled from taking any part, till reorganised, in any military operation. The whole loss of the Allies was not three hundred men.[1]

[1] Plotho, iii. 296, 297. Dan. 240, 241. Koch, i. 415, 417. Vaud. ii. 49, 51. Die Grosse Chron. iii. 603, 606.

68. Napoleon prepares to retreat. March 10.

Napoleon, anticipating a general battle, was drawing on his boots at four o'clock in the morning of the 10th, with his horse already at the door, when two dragoons, who had just arrived on foot in great consternation, were brought to him. They stated that they had escaped by a miracle from a nocturnal hourrah which the enemy had made on the bivouacs of Marmont; that the marshal himself was killed or taken, and that all was lost on that side. He immediately gave orders to suspend the preparations for a general attack, which were already commencing; and soon after, more authentic intelligence of the disaster arrived, to the effect that the marshal was neither killed nor taken, but that his corps was entirely dispersed, its artillery lost, and the fugitives, in disorder, were only beginning to rally in the neighbourhood of Fismes. The Emperor at once saw, that to persist in his attack on Laon, defended by an enemy in a very strong position, double in amount to his own force, and with his right wing, for the time at least, *hors de combat*, was a vain attempt. But how to retreat in the face of a victorious enemy was the question; for already Blucher, elated by his success, had given orders to Langeron, Sacken, York, and Kleist, to pursue Marmont with the utmost vigour;[2] and he himself was only waiting on the ramparts of Laon, from whence he saw every movement

[2] Kausler, 408. Koch, i. 409. Fain, 164. Dan. 242. Die Grosse Chron. iii. 606, 613.

in the French army, for the commencement of the retreat of the main body, to pursue on the road to Soissons.

In this dilemma Napoleon adopted the wisest course he could have pursued, which was, to remain where he was, and impose upon the Prussian general by the display of a formidable force in front; so as at once to prevent pursuit of his own corps, and relieve the pressure on that of Marmont. So completely did this plan succeed, that Blucher, who in the first instance had given orders to Bulow and Winzingerode to issue forth from Laon in pursuit of the French main body, not only countermanded the directions upon seeing that they stood firm, and seemed rather preparing for an attack, but despatched orders to the generals in pursuit of Marmont to return with their infantry, and follow him up only with their cavalry. Chernicheff in consequence, who at daybreak had made a successful attack with Winzingerode's advanced guard on the French division at Clacy, on the Allied right, finding himself unsupported, was obliged to return in haste to the foot of the hill of Laon; and shortly after nine o'clock Napoleon ordered a general advance against that formidable position. The action soon became extremely warm, and when the French approached the hill, they were received by such tremendous discharges of artillery from the heights around its foot, as well as of musketry from the loopholed villages, that after sustaining a severe loss they were obliged to retire. At four o'clock the grand park and equipages began to defile on the road to Soissons, and the French troops withdrew at all points; but the cannonade continued till nightfall, and from the summit of the ramparts of Laon, the march of the retiring columns could be traced by the sight of villages in flames, and the awful spectacle of granaries, farm-yards, and churches consuming under the reckless fury of the devastating bands, which, like a stream of lava, overspread even their own territory with conflagration and ruin.[1]

Able manœuvre by which the retreat was effected.

[1] Beauch. i. 412, 414. Dan. 242, 243. Kausler, 408, 409. Koch, i. 419, 423. Fain, 164, 165.

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70. Reflections on this battle.

Thus terminated the combats around Laon, which, though scarcely worthy of being dignified by the name of a battle, from the desultory manner in which they were conducted, and the great space over which they extended, were hardly inferior to any pitched engagement fought during the whole war in interest and importance. The whole disposable forces of the Emperor Napoleon, under his own immediate orders, had been brought to a stand; their assault upon a strong position had been defeated; the object of the expedition beyond the Marne had been frustrated, and the Grand Army left at liberty to pursue, during ten days, active operations on the side of Troyes and Fontainebleau, which, if vigorously followed up, might during the absence of the Emperor have led to the capture of Paris. The combats around Laon, including the losses sustained by Marmont, had cost the French Emperor six thousand men and forty-six pieces of cannon, while the Allies were not weakened by more than four thousand; his total loss since he left Troyes, on the 1st March, amounted to sixteen thousand men.* His situation now appeared altogether desperate:—obliged to retire towards his capital, followed by a victorious army double his own strength, only to fall there into the jaws of a still larger army, driving before it two beaten corps not mustering between them twenty-five thousand sabres and bayonets. In this expedition against Blucher, the Emperor was far from having shown his wonted skill. His

* Viz.—At Craone, . . . . . 8,000
Assault of Soissons, . . . . . 1,500
Around Laon, . . . . . 6,000
Lesser affairs, . . . . . 500

16,000

Such were the chasms made in the ranks during these sanguinary struggles, that an entire reorganisation of great part of the army took place at Soissons, by the amalgamation of the divisions which had principally suffered; and the divisions of the Young Guard of Ney and Victor, as well as the division of infantry of General Poret de Morvau, entirely disappeared.—See KOCH, i. 429; PLOTHO, iii. 301; and *Die Grosse Chronik*, iii. 613.

bloody attack on the plateau of Craone had savoured rather of the obstinacy of a victorious, than the caution of a defensive commander; and his plan of attack at Laon, operating by his two wings, separated six miles from each other, and incapable of mutual support, upon an enemy twice his strength, and occupying a central position of uncommon strength between them, was precisely such an error as he had turned to such admirable account, when committed by his adversaries at Castiglione in 1796, and at Dresden in 1813.[1]*

[1] *Ante*, ch. xx. § 105, and ch. lxxx. § 24.

71. Napoleon rests at Soissons, and Blucher at Laon.

Atlas, Plate 93.

But it soon appeared that the genius of Napoleon had been obscured for a moment, though it was not extinguished; and when all thought his fortunes desperate, he struck such a blow, in a quarter where it was least expected, as had wellnigh re-established his affairs, by the renewed timidity which it infused into the Austrian councils. On the night of the 10th the Emperor slept at Chavignon, on the road to Soissons; and on the 11th, the army continued its retreat to the defiles in front of that town. This fortress, which had again fallen into the hands of the French after Radzewitz's retreat to Laon, ever of primary importance during the campaign in this quarter, now offered the same secure passage across the Aisne to the retreating French, which it formerly had done to the Allied army. The whole of the 12th was spent there also: the Emperor being busied with Mortier and the officers of engineers in providing for the defence of the place; and while giving a brief repose to the wearied soldiers of his army, he himself rode out on horseback to survey the environs, and choose the positions

* This is accordingly admitted by the ablest of the French military historians, and the most zealous partisans of Napoleon. "It does not appear that the Emperor acted according to the rules of art, or the prudence which the disproportion of his means required, in engaging the Duke of Ragusa, (Marmont,) at the same time that he attacked himself. He was as yet uncertain of the line of the enemy's operations, and his army was not a quarter of theirs in number. That quarter might have conquered if they had been mustered together; but it was impossible to separate one corps without exposing it to destruction from a force tenfold its own."—VAUDONCOURT, ii. 63.

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which might appear most defensible. During all this time, and, in fact, for nine days after the battle of Laon, Blucher remained in a state of complete inactivity with his vast army in that impregnable position—a delay, after such an advantage as he had recently gained, which would appear altogether inexplicable, if we did not know that, at this period, the Allied army was almost starving from the total exhaustion of the country in which it had so long carried on the war; that the troops, worn out with six weeks' incessant marching and fighting in the most inclement weather, stood urgently in need of repose; that the veteran field-marshal was so ill, from ague and inflammation in the eyes, as to be unable to sit on horseback during the remainder of the campaign; and that Gneisenau and the officers of his staff felt that, having amply performed the part allotted to them in it, the time had arrived when it behoved the Grand Army to do something worthy of its gigantic strength, and such as might be expected after its long-continued inaction[1] *

[1] Dan. 243, 245. Fain, 165, 166. Koch, i. 420, 422. Plotho, iii. 299, 302. Die Grosse Chron. iii. 624, 626.

72. Capture of Rheims by St Priest.

On the night of the 12th, however, Napoleon received information which induced him to alter the line of his operations, by presenting him with a new enemy accessible to his strokes, and capable of being destroyed. General St Priest, with his corps of Russians, forming part of the reserves of the army of Silesia, had been left at Chalons, in order to keep up the communication between Blucher and Schwartzenberg; and having learned, during the concentration of all the French troops around Laon, that the garrison left by them in Rheims was very weak, particularly in cavalry, he resolved to attempt to carry the place. Like all the towns in that quarter, it was fortified, though not strongly, and the walls were in disrepair in several places, and but imperfectly armed; and St

* "The true object of our stay here is not a military one. The only design I have in view is to give repose to a harassed army, and, as far as possible, to provide it with bread."—BLUCHER *to* WINZINGERODE, 14*th March* 1814; DANILEFSKY, 244, 245.

Priest, having been reinforced by the Prussian brigade of General Jagon, who had marched on after the surrender of Erfurth, determined to hazard an attack. The garrison, about two thousand strong, with only twelve pieces of cannon, were little in a condition to defend a town containing thirty thousand inhabitants against a corps of fifteen thousand men. He met, accordingly, with very little resistance: the garrison, after discharging a few rounds, endeavoured to escape out of the place by a gate which had not been blockaded, and six hundred of them, with ten guns, were made prisoners in the attempt. The town itself was taken, with hardly any of the outrages or disorders consequent on a place carried by assault; some property which had been plundered was immediately restored, and the marauders punished; St Priest himself went to the cathedral to return thanks for his victory; and the troops, for the sake of recreation, were in great part allowed to amuse themselves in the surrounding hamlets.[1]

March 12.

[1] Dan. 248, 250. Burgh. 262. Koch, i. 429, 434. Fain, 166. Die Grosse Chron. iii. 626, 628. Valentini, ii. 171.

73. Advance of Napoleon to Rheims.

The capture of this important town at once re-established the communications of Blucher with the Grand Army, and threatened Napoleon's right flank. He no sooner heard of it, accordingly, than he gave orders for the whole army, with the exception of Mortier's corps, which was left for the defence of Soissons, to defile to the right on the road for Rheims. With such expedition did they march, that on the evening of the same day on which they set out from Soissons, the advanced guards appeared before the walls of Rheims. The Prussian videttes could hardly believe their own eyes, when the increasing numbers of the enemy showed that a serious attack was intended. But notwithstanding repeated warnings sent to St Priest, he persisted in declaring it was only a few light troops that were appearing, and could not be brought to believe that the army so recently defeated at Laon was already in a condition to resume offensive operations. At length, at four o'clock, the cries

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of the troops, and well-known grenadier caps of the Old Guard, announced that the Emperor himself was on the field; and then, as well he might, the Russian general hastily began to take measures for his defence. The nearest regiments, without order, or any regular array, hurried off to the threatened point; the French, skilfully feigning to be outnumbered, ceased firing and fell back, and for a short time all was quiet. St Priest was confirmed by this circumstance in the belief that it was only a partisan division which was before him, or, at most, the beaten corps of Marmont, for which he conceived himself fully a match; and even on being assured by a prisoner that Napoleon was with the troops, he said, "He will not step over fourteen thousand men. You need not ask which way to retire—there will be no retreat."[1]

[1] Die Grosse Chron. iii. 630, 634. Plotho, iii. 353. Koch, i. 440.

74. Recapture of Rheims by Napoleon.

Shortly afterwards Napoleon arrived, and, after looking on the town for a short time, dryly observed, "The ladies of Rheims will soon have a bad quarter of an hour," and gave orders for an immediate attack. The Allies by this time had almost entirely assembled in front of the town, and occupied a position in two lines, guarding the approaches to it; the right resting on the river Vesle, the left extending to the Basse-Muire; the reserves on the plateau of St-Genevieve in the suburbs, where twenty-four pieces of cannon were planted. These preparations seemed to prognosticate a vigorous defence; but the promptitude and force of Napoleon's attack rendered them of very little avail. Eight thousand horse, supported by thirty pieces of horse-artillery, were directed at once against the Russian left, to which St-Priest had hardly any cavalry to oppose; in a few minutes three Prussian battalions were surrounded and made prisoners. At the same time Marmont, supported by the Guards of Honour and cavalry of the Guard, advanced by the highroad direct upon the enemy's centre. The Russian general upon this, perceiving that he was immensely overmatched, gave orders for the first

line to fall back on the second; and, at the same time, the battery of twenty-four guns withdrew towards the rear. Hardly were these movements commenced, when he himself was wounded in the shoulder by a ball. This event discouraged the troops; and the retiring columns, aware of their danger from the great masses which were everywhere pressing after them, fell into disorder, and hastened, with more speed than was consistent with discipline, into the town. Owing to the narrowness of the bridge and streets, the men got entangled at every step, and in less than a quarter of an hour became a mere mob; while the French infantry and cavalry, with loud shouts, were pressing on their rear. Such was the scene of horror and confusion which soon ensued, that it appeared impossible for any part of the corps to escape; and none in all probability would have done so, but for the steadiness of the regiment of Riazan, which, under its heroic colonel, Count Scobelof, formed square on the field of battle, and not only repulsed the repeated attacks of an enormous mass of cavalry at the entrance of the town, and gave time for a large part of the corps to defile in the rear, but itself pierced through the forest of sabres with the bayonet, bearing their bleeding and dying general in their arms.[1]

[1] Dan. 252, 253. Koch, i. 439, 440. Burgh. 203, Vaud. ii. 112, 114. Plotho, iii. 353, 354. Die Grosse Chron. iii. 633, 634.

75. Entrance of Napoleon into the town.

General Emmanuel now took the command; and the most vigorous efforts were made at the entrance of the town, by disposing the troops in the houses which adjoined it; and so obstinate was the resistance which they presented, that for above three hours the French were kept at bay. Towards midnight, however, it was discovered that the enemy, by fording the Vesle, had got round the town, and therefore the whole troops in it were withdrawn, some on the road to Chalons, others on that to Laon, while the defence of the gate was intrusted to a non-commissioned officer of the 33d light infantry, with two hundred men. This little band of heroes kept their ground to the last, and were found by the officer

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sent to withdraw them dividing their few remaining cartridges, and encouraging each other to hold out even till death. When they received orders to retire, they did so in perfect order, as the evacuation was completed; and they fortunately succeeded in effecting their retreat in the darkness. Napoleon then made his entry into the town at one o'clock in the morning, by torch-light, amidst the acclamations of his troops, and the enthusiastic cheers of the inhabitants, who gave vent to the general transport in a spontaneous illumination. In this brilliant affair the French took two thousand five hundred prisoners, eleven guns, and a hundred caissons, and the total loss of the Allies was three thousand five hundred. On the other hand the Emperor Napoleon was only weakened by eight hundred men: a wonderful achievement to have been effected by a worn-out army, after nearly two months' incessant marching and fighting, and two days after a disastrous defeat; but more memorable still, by one circumstance which gives it a peculiar interest — it was the LAST TOWN NAPOLEON EVER TOOK.[1]

[1] Koch, i. 439, 440. Plotho, iii. 355. Vaud. ii. 114, 115. Burgh. 203. Dan. 253, 254. Die Grosse Chron. iii. 633, 634.

76. Stay of Napoleon at Rheims. March 14 to 18.

On the same day General Jansen arrived at the French headquarters from Flanders, bringing with him a reinforcement of six thousand men, which he had collected from the garrisons in the neighbourhood of the Ardennes forest, in obedience to the orders despatched from Fismes twelve days before. This reinforcement was of vast importance at that period, when the Emperor was so severely weakened by the losses of the dreadful campaign in which he had been engaged; and it illustrates the extreme imprudence, of which he had now himself become sensible, of that obstinate tenacity of disposition, which had prompted him so long to retain fifty thousand veterans in useless inactivity in the German fortresses, and as many more in the places on the Rhine, while he himself, with no greater force than either taken separately, was reduced to his last

resources on the plains of Champagne. To repair if possible the error he had committed, he despatched Ney to Chalons, and General Vincent to Epernay, who expelled the enemy from these towns; while the great body of the French forces were cantoned in Rheims and the villages in its vicinity. From Chalons Ney despatched, in profusion, officers and secret emissaries, with instructions to all the garrisons on the Rhine, and between that and the theatre of war, to hold themselves in readiness to break through the blockading forces with which they were environed, and join the Emperor as soon as they should receive intimation that the proper moment was arrived. At the same time directions were given to the peasantry in all the rural districts, the moment the Allies began to retreat, to fall on their flanks and lines of communication, and do them all the mischief in their power. During all this time Blucher remained inactive at Laon; and on the 17th a grand review of all his forces took place, when it was ascertained, that with the additions received since the battle there, from St Priest's corps and other sources, they now numbered a hundred and nine thousand combatants, of whom twenty-nine thousand were horse, with two hundred and sixty-five guns.[1]

[1] Fain, 167, 168. Koch, i. 442, 444. Vaud. ii. 208, 209. Grosse Chron. iii. 383, 386.

77. Last review of Napoleon at Rheims. March 15.

Meanwhile a review took place at Rheims of all the troops under the immediate command of the Emperor; but how different from the splendid military spectacles of the Tuileries or Chammartin, which had so often dazzled his sight with the pomp of apparently irresistible power! Wasted away to half the numbers which they possessed when they crossed the Marne a fortnight before, the greater part of the regiments exhibited only the skeletons of military array. In some, more officers than privates were to be seen in the ranks; in all, the appearance of the troops, the haggard air of the men, their worn-out dresses, and the strange motley of which these were composed, bespoke the total exhaustion of the

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empire. It was evident to all that Napoleon was expending his last resources. Beside the veterans of the Guard—the iron men whom nothing could daunt, but whose tattered garments and soiled accoutrements bespoke the dreadful fatigues to which they had been subjected—were to be seen young conscripts, but recently torn from the embraces of maternal love, and whose wan visages and faltering steps told but too clearly that they were unequal to the weight of the arms which they bore. The gaunt figures and woful aspect of the horses, the broken carriages and blackened mouths of the guns, the crazy and fractured artillery-waggons which defiled past, the general confusion of arms, battalions, and uniforms, even in the best-appointed corps, spoke of the mere remains of the vast military array which had so long stood triumphant against the world in arms. The soldiers exhibited none of their ancient enthusiasm as they defiled past the Emperor: silent and sad they took their way before him: the stern realities of war had chased away its enthusiastic ardour. All felt that in this dreadful contest they themselves would perish, happy if they had not previously witnessed the degradation of France.[1]

[1] Koch, i. 442, 444. Fain, 167, 168.

# APPENDIX.

## CHAPTER LXXIX.

NOTE A, p. 50.

TOTAL FRENCH ARMY IN GERMANY AT THE RESUMPTION OF HOSTILITIES.

*Imperial Guard. Infantry.*—Marshal MORTIER.

| *Old Guard.* | Bats. | Squads. | Foot. | Horse. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Friant, grenadiers, | 4 | | 6,000 | |
| Curial, chasseurs, | 4 | | | |
| *Young Guard.* | | | | |
| Dumoustier, | 8 | | 22,000 | |
| Barrois, | 8 | | | |
| Boyeldieu, | 8 | | | |
| Roguet, | 8 | | | |
| *Cavalry.*—General NANSOUTY. | | | | |
| Guyot, grenadiers, | | 6 | | 5,000 |
| Ornano, dragoons, | | 6 | | |
| Lefebvre Desnouettes, chasseurs, | | 6 | | |
| Krazinski, lancers, | | 6 | | |
| Guards of Honour, | | 10 | | |
| *1st Corps.*—General VANDAMME at Zittau. | | | | |
| 1 Dumonceau, | 8 | | 13,000 | 1,000 |
| 12 Philippon, | 8 | | | |
| 23 Dufour, | 8 | | | |
| Brigade, Corbineau, | | 8 | | |
| *2d Corps.*—VICTOR at Zittau. | | | | |
| 4 Teste, | 8 | | 22,400 | |
| 5 Corbineau, | 8 | | | |
| 6 Mouton Duverney, | 8 | | | |
| 6 Bis, | 8 | | | |

| | Bats. | Squads. | Foot. | Horse. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *3d Corps.*—Ney at Liegnitz. | | | | |
| 8 Souham, | 15 | | | |
| 9 Delmas, | 13 | | 33,800 | |
| 10 Albert, | 13 | | | |
| 11 Ricard, | 13 | | | |
| A brigade, | | 10 | | 1,300 |
| *4th Corps.*—General Bertrand at Sprottau. | | | | |
| 12 Morand, | 8 | | | |
| 15 Fontanelli, (Italians,) | 12 | | 20,000 | |
| 18 Franquemont, Würtembergers, | 8 | | | |
| *5th Corps.*—General Lauriston at Goldberg. | | | | |
| 16 Maison, | 12 | | | |
| 17 Puthod, | 10 | | 23,800 | |
| 19 Rochambeau, | 12 | | | |
| *6th Corps.*—Marmont at Buntzlau. | | | | |
| 20 Compans, | 10 | | | |
| 21 Bonnet, | 8 | | 18,200 | |
| 22 Friedrich, | 8 | | | |
| *7th Corps.*—General Reynier at Görlitz. | | | | |
| 32 Dunette, | 10 | | | |
| 37 Lecocq, (Saxons,) | 8 | | 24,000 | |
| 38 Sahrer, (ib.) | 8 | | | |
| 39 Marchant, (Hessians,) | 10 | | | |
| *8th Corps, (Poles.)*—Poniatowski at Zittau. | | | | |
| 25 Dombrowski, | 8 | | 12,000 | |
| 27 Rosnietzki, | 8 | | | |
| A brigade, | | 6 | | 800 |
| *11th Corps.*—Macdonald at Lowenberg. | | | | |
| 31 Gerard, | 10 | | | |
| 35 Fressinet, | 8 | | 18,200 | |
| 36 Charpentier, | 8 | | | |
| A brigade, | | 8 | | 1,000 |
| *12th Corps.*—Oudinot at Dahme. | | | | |
| 13 Gruyer, | 10 | | | |
| 14 Guilleminot, | 14 | | 21,000 | |
| Raglowich, (Bavarians,) | 6 | | | |
| A brigade, | | 6 | | 800 |
| *14th Corps.*—St-Cyr at Pirna. | | | | |
| 43 Claparède, | 9 | | | |
| 44 | 3 | | 13,500 | |
| 45 Rayout, | 9 | | | |

| | Bats. | Squads. | Foot. | Horse. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Reserve of Cavalry.*—The KING OF NAPLES. | | | | |
| 1*st Corps.*—LATOUR MAUBOURG at Görlitz. | | | | |
| Light Cavalry, Andenarde, | | 24 | | |
| Do. Castex, | | 30 | | |
| Cuirassiers, Doumerc, | | 18 | | 12,000 |
| Do. St Germain, | | 24 | | |
| 2*d Corps.*—SEBASTIANI at Liegnitz. | | | | |
| Light cavalry, Excelmans, | | 28 | | |
| Do. Defrance, | | 21 | | 8,300 |
| Cuirassiers, Bordesoult, | | 18 | | |
| 3*d Corps.*—ARRIGHI at Leipsic. | | | | |
| Chasseurs, Jacquinot, | | 24 | | |
| Do. Fournier, | | 24 | | |
| Dragoons, Lorge, | | 30 | | 6,000 |
| Do. | | 33 | | |
| 4*th Corps.*—KELLERMANN at Zittau. | | | | |
| Sokolnitzki, (Poles,) | | 15 | | |
| Ulminski, | | 14 | | 6,000 |
| Sulkonzki, | | 16 | | |
| Total of the Grand Army, | 367 | 391 | 248,300 | 42,200 |

DETACHED DIVISIONS.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 13*th Corps.*—DAVOUST at Hamburg. | | | | |
| 3d Loison, | 8 | | | |
| 40th Pecheux, | 8 | | 18,000 | |
| 41st Thiébault, | 8 | | | |
| A brigade, | | 8 | | 1,200 |
| AUGEREAU at Würtzburg, Bamberg, and Baireuth. | | | | |
| 42d, | 9 | | | |
| 51st, | 51 | | 21,000 | |
| 52d, | 13 | | | |
| 5*th Corps* of Cavalry, MILHAUD. | | | | |
| Light cavalry, Piri, | | 12 | | |
| Dragoons, Berkhaim, | | 16 | | 3,000 |
| Do. l'Heritier, | | 18 | | |
| Danes under Davoust, | | | 15,000 | 900 |
| Bavarian Army of Observation on the Inn, | | | 22,200 | 1,800 |
| Total detached, | 54 | 54 | 76,200 | 6,900 |

SUMMARY OF FRENCH FORCES IN GERMANY.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total of the French Grand Army, | 367 | 391 | 248,300 | 42,200 |
| Total of the detached divisions, | 54 | 54 | 76,200 | 6,900 |
| Grand total of French in Germany, | 421 | 445 | 324,500 | 49,100 |

—VAUDONCOURT, vol. i. p. 128.

FRENCH BLOCKADED FORCES IN GERMANY.

| | |
|---|---|
| The Garrison of Dantzic, | 20,000 |
| Garrison of Zamosc, | 4,000 |
| Garrison of Modlin, | 3,000 |
| Garrison of Stettin, | 10,000 |
| Garrison of Cüstrin, | 5,000 |
| Garrison of Glogau, | 6,000 |
| Garrison of Torgau, | 8,000 |
| Garrison of Wittenberg, | 5,000 |
| Garrison of Magdeburg, | 10,000 |
| Garrison of Würtzburg, | 1,500 |
| Garrison of Dresden, | 5,000 |
| Garrison of Freyburg, | 800 |
| Garrison of Erfurth, | 2,000 |
| Total, | 80,300 |

—PLOTHO, vol. ii. Appendix, p. 90.

PRINCE EUGENE'S ARMY IN ITALY.

| | Battalions. | Guns. | Men. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1st division, Quesnel, | 12 | 18 | 7,777 |
| 2d division, Gratien, | | 16 | 8,200 |
| 3d division, Verdier, | | 18 | 7,486 |
| 4th division, Marcognet, | 11 | 20 | 7,189 |
| 5th division, Palombini, | 12 | 16 | 9,562 |
| 6th division, Lecchi, | 12 | 16 | 7,891 |
| Reserve. | | | |
| Three battalions, | | | 2,469 |
| Cavalry. | | | |
| Twelve squadrons, Mermet, | | | 1,800 |
| Cannon. | | | |
| Reserve, 12 guns, 6 bombs, | | 18 | |
| Great park, 6 guns, 5 bombs, | | 11 | |
| Total, | 69 | 133 | 52,374 |

—*Victoires et Conquêtes*, xxii. p. 192.

SUMMARY OF FRENCH FORCES IN GERMANY AND ITALY.

| | Infantry. | Cavalry. |
|---|---|---|
| In the field, | 260,000 | 42,000 |
| Detached, | 39,000 | 4,200 |
| Prince Eugene's army in Italy, | 50,574 | 1,800 |
| Blockaded garrisons, | 80,300 | |
| Danes, | 15,000 | 900 |
| Bavarian Army of Observation, | 22,200 | 1,800 |
| Total, | 467,074 | 50,900 |
| Grand total, | 517,974 | |

## ALLIED FORCES IN GERMANY AND ITALY AT RESUMPTION OF HOSTILITIES.

### ALLIED FORCES.

| | Men. | Cannon. |
|---|---|---|
| The Grand Army of Bohemia under Prince Schwartzenberg, | 237,770 | 698 |
| The Army of Silesia under Blucher, | 93,322 | 356 |
| The Army of the North under the Crown-Prince, | 154,012 | 387 |
| The Russian reserve under Benningsen, | 57,329 | 398 |
| The Corps d'Armée of the Prince of Reuss, | 26,750 | 42 |
| The Austrian army of reserve, | 50,000 | 120 |
| Total in the field, | 619,183 | 1,801 |

### BLOCKADING FORCES.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Before Dantzic, | | 35,000 |
| Before Zamosc, | | 14,700 |
| Before Glogau, | | 29,450 |
| Before Cüstrin, | | 8,450 |
| Before Stettin, | | 14,600 |
| Total blockading force, | 102,200 | |
| Total in the field, | 619,183 | |
| Grand total, | 721,383 | |

—PLOTHO, vol. ii. Appendix, p. 72.

---

*Composition of the Allied Forces.*

### I. AUSTRIANS.

| | |
|---|---|
| The Grand Army of Bohemia under Prince Schwartzenberg, | 130,000 |
| Army under the Prince of Reuss on the Inn, | 24,750 |
| Army of Italy under Field-Marshal Hiller, | 50,000 |
| Army of reserve under Archduke Ferdinand, and the Prince of Würtemberg, | 60,000 |
| Total of Austrians, | 264,750 |

—PLOTHO, vol. ii. Appendix, 26.

### II. RUSSIANS.

*Russian Troops in the Grand Army of Bohemia.*

| | Battalions. | Squadrons. | Batteries. | Cossack Regts. | Men. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Corps of Wittgenstein, | 39 | 36 | 7 | 4 | 22,400 |
| 2. Guards under the Grand-duke Constantine, | 46 | 72 | 21½ | 20 | 36,020 |
| Total, | 85 | 108 | 28½ | 24 | 58,420 |

*Russian Troops in the Silesian Army.*

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Corps of Langeron, | 46 | 49 | 11 | 7 | 27,600 |
| 2. Corps of Sacken, | 24 | 20 | 5 | 8 | 15,000 |
| 3. Corps of St Priest, | 21 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 9,400 |
| Total, | 91 | 73 | 19 | 15 | 52,000 |

*Russian Troops in the Army of the North.*

| | Battalions. | Squadrons. | Batteries. | Cossack Regts. | Men. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Corps of Winzingerode, | 11 | 8 | 3 | 8 | 8,826 |
| 2. Corps of Woronzoff, | 7 | 15 | 4 | 8 | 8,667 |
| 3. Corps of Walmoden, | 11 | 12 | 1 | 18 | 8,056 |
| Total, . . | 29 | 35 | 8 | 34 | 25,549 |
| The Russian army of reserve under Benningsen, | 75 | 68 | 15 | 8 | 57,329 |
| Total in the field, | 270 | 284 | 99½ | 81 | 193,298 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Infantry, . . . . . | 121,092 |
| Cavalry, . . . . . | 31,272 |
| Artillery, . . . . . | 14,691 |
| Cossacks, . . . . . | 26,243 |
| Total Men, . . . . . | 193,298 |
| ... Cannon, . . . . | 334 |

*Russian Reserve under Benningsen.*

| | Bat. | Squad. | Guns. | Men. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Corps of Markoff . . . | 14 | 70 | 38 | 16,467 |
| 2. Corps of Doctoroff, . . | 29 | 25 | 120 | 26,571 |
| 3. Corps of Osterman Tolstoy, . . | 30 | 27 | 40 | 17,045 |
| Total, . . . . . | 73 | 122 | 198 | 60,083 |

*Effective in the Field.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Infantry, . . . . . | 40,449 |
| Cavalry and Cossacks, . . . . | 12,886 |
| Artillery and Pioneers, . . . . | 3,944 |
| Total Men, . . . . . | 57,477 |
| ... Cannon, . . . . . | 198 |

—Plotho, vol. ii. Appendix, p. 8.

*Russian Blockading Forces.*

| | Men. |
|---|---|
| Corps at Dantzic, . . . . . | 29,100 |
| at Zamosc, . . . . . | 10,300 |
| at Glogau, . . . . . | 12,600 |
| at Modlin, . . . . . | 4,000 |
| Total, . . . . . | 56,000 |

*Summary of Russian Forces in Germany.*

| | |
|---|---|
| In the Field, . . . . . | 193,298 |
| Blockading Force, . . . . . | 56,000 |
| Grand total of Russians, . . . . | 249,298 |

—Plotho, vol. ii. Appendix, p. 32.

III. PRUSSIANS.

| | Batts. of the line. | Batts. of Landwehr. | Jager companies. | Squads. of the line. | Squads. of Landwehr. | Batteries. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Royal Guard, | ... | ... | 2 | 8 | ... | 2 |
| 1st corps, | 20 | 24 | 4 | 28 | 16 | 13 |
| 2d corps, | 24 | 16 | 4 | 28 | 14 | 16 |
| 3d corps, | 28 | 12 | 2 | 29 | 16 | 10 |
| 4th corps, | 11 | 69 | ... | ... | 58 | 11 |
| Corps of Walmoden, | 5 | ... | ... | 5 | ... | ... |
| Blockading force before Glogau, | ... | ... | ... | ... | 4 | ... |
| Blockading force before Dantzic, | ... | ... | ... | ... | 6 | 1 |
| Total, | 94 | 121 | 12 | 98 | 114 | 53 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Infantry of the Line, | 72,200 |
| Landwehr Infantry, | 112,000 |
| Jager Infantry, | 2,400 |
| Pioneers, | 700 |
| Cavalry of the Line, | 14,700 |
| Landwehr Cavalry, | 17,400 |
| Artillery, | 8,100 |
| Total, | 227,500 |

*Summary of Prussians.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Infantry, | 187,300 |
| Cavalry, | 32,100 |
| Artillery, | 8,100 |
| Grand total of Prussians, | 227,500 |

—PLOTHO, vol. ii. Appendix, 23.

IV. SWEDES AND ENGLISH TROOPS FROM THE NORTH OF GERMANY.

| | Battal. | Squad. | Batteries. | Gunners. | Cos. Reg. | Men. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Swedes, | 35 | 32 | 9 | 62 | ... | 24,018 |
| English, | 4 | 6 | ... | 6 | ... | 3,000 |
| Total Swedes and English, | | | | | | 27,018 |

*Composition and Strength of the different Allied Armies in Germany.*

ARMY OF SILESIA.

| | Infantry. | Cavalry. | Artillery. | Cossacks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Corps of York, | 29,783 | 6,033 | 1,917 | ... |
| Corps of Sacken, | 9,600 | 2,000 | 1,000 | 3,600 |
| Corps of Langeron, | 18,464 | 2,800 | 2,600 | 4,400 |
| Corps of St Priest, | 8,400 | 2,920 | 600 | 1,200 |
| Total, | 66,247 | 13,753 | 6,117 | 9,200 |

—PLOTHO, vol. ii. Appendix, 51.

| | |
|---|---|
| Infantry, | 66,247 |
| Cavalry, | 13,753 |
| Artillery, | 6,117 |
| Cossacks, | 9,200 |
| Grand total, | 95,317 |
| Cannon, | 536 |

ARMY OF THE NORTH.

| | Infantry. | Cavalry. | Artillery. | Cossacks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Swedish Army, | 18,573 | 3,742 | 1,703 | ... |
| Corps of Winzingerode, | 5,465 | 834 | 583 | 2,214 |
| Corps of Woronzoff, | 4,262 | 2,910 | 883 | 4,197 |
| Corps of Walmoden, | 19,635 | 3,850 | 561 | 1,350 |
| Corps of Bulow, | 32,000 | 6,350 | 1,800 | 1,200 |
| Corps of Tauenzein, | 33,000 | 5,200 | 700 | ... |
| Total, | 112,935 | 22,886 | 6,230 | 8,961 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Infantry, | 112,935 |
| Cavalry, | 22,886 |
| Artillery, | 6,230 |
| Cossacks, | 8,961 |
| English troops, | 3,000 |
| Grand total, | 154,012 |

—PLOTHO, vol. ii. Appendix, 62.

GRAND ARMY OF BOHEMIA.

| | Batts. | Squads. | Batteries. | Cossack Reg. | Men. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Austrians, | 112 | 124 | 45 | ... | 130,850 |
| Russians,— | | | | | |
| Wittgenstein, | 39 | 36 | 5 | 4 | 58,420 |
| Reserve and Guard, | 46½ | 72 | 21½ | 21 | |
| Prussians,— | | | | | |
| Kleist, | 41 | 44 | 14 | ... | 48,500 |
| Guards, | 6½ | 8 | 2 | ... | |
| Total, | 245 | 284 | 87½ | 25 | 237,770 |

| | Infantry. | Cavalry. | Artillery. | Cossacks. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Austrians, | 99,300 | 24,800 | 6,750 | ... |
| Russians, | 34,600 | 10,900 | 5,750 | 7,170 |
| Prussians, | 38,300 | 7,800 | 2,400 | ... |
| Total, | 172,200 | 43,500 | 14,900 | 7,170 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Infantry, | 172,200 |
| Cavalry, | 43,500 |
| Artillery, | 14,900 |
| Cossacks, | 7,170 |
| Grand total, | 237,770 |
| Cannon, | 698 |

—PLOTHO, vol. ii. Appendix, 44.

# CHAPTER LXXX.

NOTE A, p. 187.

Number of different persons who were quartered in Dresden and its suburbs during the periods undermentioned, viz.:—

| | New Town. | Old Town. | Suburbs. | Friedrichstadt. | Total. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| From 26th Feb. to 25th March 1813. | 117,338 | 67,250 | 43,832 | 8,385 | 236,805 |
| From 26th March to 7th May, | 208,600 | 95,862 | 49,128 | 21,137 | 374,727 |
| From 8th May to 14th June, | 499,146 | 274,709 | 273,832 | 90,513 | 1,088,293 |
| From 15th June to 15th November, | 1,635,275 | 1,270,457 | 1,523,595 | 633,344 | 5,062,871 |
| From 16th Nov. to 31st December, | 280,375 | 162,646 | 110,068 | 61,160 | 614,249 |
| From 1st Jan. to 31st Dec. 1814, | 1,346,971 | 463,465 | 724,735 | 177,174 | 2,712,345 |
| Total, | 4,087,705 | 2,334,389 | 2,725,190 | 991,713 | 10,089,290 |

—ODELEBEN, *Campagne de* 1813 *en Saxe*, vol. ii. p. 287.

NOTE B, p. 187.

Three different approximate statements of the force of the French army received at the headquarters of the Allies:—

OPPOSED TO THE ALLIED GRAND ARMY, AT DRESDEN.

| | Aug. 13th. | Sept. 20th. | Sept. 24th. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Old Guard, | 6,607 | 4,000 | 25,000 |
| Young Guard, | 32,000 | 24,000 | 3,000 |
| Cavalry of the Guard, | 10,500 | 6,000 | |
| Vandamme, | 25,000 | 4,000 | 6,000 |
| Victor, | 21,000 | 18,000 | 14,000 |
| Marmont, | 30,000 | 20,000 | 18,000 |
| Poniatowski, | 15,000 | 10,000 | 11,000 |
| St-Cyr, | 31,000 | 20,000 | 20,000 |
| Latour Maubourg's cavalry, | 10,000 | 6,000 | 7,000 |
| Total, | 181,107 | 112,000 | 104,000 |

OPPOSED TO THE NORTHERN ARMY UNDER BERNADOTTE.

| | Aug. 13th. | Sept. 20th. | Sept. 24th. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bertrand, | 21,000 | 14,000 | 15,000 |
| Reynier, | 20,000 | 8,000 | 6,000 |
| Oudinot, | 24,000 | 10,000 | 18,000 |
| Arrighi and Kellermann, (cavalry,) | 10,000 | 7,000 | 6,000 |
| Total, | 75,000 | 39,000 | 45,000 |

OPPOSED TO BLUCHER IN SILESIA.

| | Aug. 13th. | Sept. 20th. | Sept. 24th. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Souham, | 32,000 | 22,000 | 18,000 |
| Lauriston, | 35,000 | 10,000 | 3,000 |
| Macdonald, | 21,000 | 14,000 | 12,000 |
| Sebastiani and Milhaud, (cavalry,) | 13,000 | 3,000 | 5,000 |
| Total on the right, | 101,000 | 49,000 | 38,000 |
| Total on the left, | 75,000 | 39,000 | 45,000 |
| Total at Dresden, | 181,107 | 112,000 | 104,000 |
| Grand total, | 357,107 | 200,000 | 187,000 |

—BURGHERSH'S *War in Germany in* 1813, p. 316.

# CHAPTER LXXXI.

NOTE A, p. 197.

## HOLOGRAPH NOTES OF NAPOLEON ON PLANS OF THE CAMPAIGN AT DRESDEN.

*First Note.—Position of the Enemy.*

"It appears certain that the enemy's army of Silesia will move on Wittenberg, and that the grand army of Töplitz will make a movement to its left.

"The enemy's army of Silesia cannot be considered less than sixty thousand men, with the corps of York, Blucher, and Langeron.

"The army of Berlin, composed of a Swedish corps, a Russian corps, and the corps of Bulow and of Tauenzein, can hardly be less.

"There will thus be upon the Lower Elbe an army of a hundred and twenty thousand men; it is doubtful whether it has not detached a body towards Hamburg.

"The army of Töplitz—composed of Austrians, a Prussian corps, and a Russian corps—cannot be considered less than a hundred and twenty thousand men. The project of the Allies, then, will be to march two large armies, one by the right, the other by the left, and to oblige the Emperor to quit Dresden."

*Second Note.—Position of the French Army.*

"The fourth and seventh corps, under the orders of the Prince of Moskwa, are on the Lower Elbe.

"The Duke of Ragusa, with the first corps of cavalry and the third of infantry, is at Eilenburg and Torgau. These two armies form, together, a force of eighty thousand men, covering the left.

"The first, the fourteenth, the second, the fifth, and the eighth, form a force of seventy thousand men, covering the right.

"Lastly, the eleventh, the Guard, and the second corps of cavalry, forming a force of sixty thousand men, are in the centre."

*Third Note.—What should be done.*

"It will be ascertained this evening if all the army of Silesia, or only a part of it, has marched on Wittenberg.

"On the one or the other hypothesis, we may resume the offensive by the right bank, and move upon Torgau with the Guard and the eleventh corps; there join the second and third; and thus, with an army of a hundred thousand men, debouch from Torgau by the right bank, on the bridges of the enemy.

"All the corps which cover the right will retire before the enemy upon Dresden, as soon as they shall have perceived the movement, and, if necessary, give up Dresden to move upon Torgau."

*Another Project.*

"This project will consist in moving all the forces on Leipsic, and entirely giving up Dresden.

"For that object, the eleventh, the Guards, and the second corps of cavalry, will set out for Würtschen; the third and fifth will move upon Coblentz; the first and the fourteenth will move upon Dresden.

"Having thus sacrificed the magazines, the fortifications, and the hospitals, we will try to beat the right wing of the enemy; and if we succeed, we will return to Dresden.

"If we do not succeed in beating the right wing of the enemy in consequence of their getting out of our reach, we will evidently be obliged to take the line of the Saale."

*Third Project.*

"Strengthen the left wing by the eleventh corps, and await the course of events in that position.

"*Dresden, 5th October* 1813."

*Other Notes on the Situation of the Army.*

"It is impossible to enter winter-quarters at Dresden without a battle. There are two plans to follow.

"The one, to watch Dresden, and to seek an engagement; afterwards, to return there, and to find all things in the same position, if we conquer.

"The other, to leave Dresden entirely; endeavour to give battle; and, if we gain it, to return to Dresden, beating the Austrian army in Bohemia. We will then arrive only accidentally at Dresden; because, even after we have gained the battle, there is no Elbe during the winter, and it is hardly possible to carry on offensive operations; and then Dresden cannot be the centre of operations. It would much more naturally be at Leipsic, or at Magdeburg."

*Movements on the First Plan.*

"If we wish to preserve Dresden, it will be necessary to act in the following manner:—

"To intrust the guard of Dresden to the first and fifteenth corps.

"To leave the second, the fifth, and the eighth in observation at Chemnitz and Freyberg, and to give battle with the sixth, the third, the fourth, the seventh, the eleventh, and the Guard."

*Movements on the Second Plan.*

"It will be necessary to post, the day after to-morrow, the second, the fifth, and the eighth corps, the last at Altenburg, and not move on Dresden, holding Chemnitz, but as if they came from Leipsic; to march the first and the fourteenth on Dresden, to follow up the movement; or perhaps to bring up the first and the fourteenth, and to place them in like manner on the road from Nossen, near the heights of Waldheim, having their rear at Leipsic."

*Difference of the two Plans.*

"In the first plan, being obliged to leave the second and the fifth corps in the rear at Dresden, they may be reached by the enemy, who may move on Altenburg, and from thence may advance so quickly on Leipsic, that that town will find itself exposed; and the troops which will be left at Dresden can, by the slightest fault, be compromised; and, in place of evacuating Dresden, be driven from it.

"In the second plan, they may form in the end two armies, which may be placed in the natural order in which they happen to be, preserving the central position, to march either to the right or left.

"The Emperor having gone from Dresden, the first and fourteenth corps, the second and fifteenth, may not understand their position, and be unable to combine their operations, and may find themselves cut off.

"In the first plan, I have left the corps to guard Dresden: it is then necessary that his Majesty should undertake that business, and that he should remain either in Dresden or the environs. In that case they lose many opportunities on the left; it is even doubtful whether, his Majesty not being present in person, it would be advantageous to give battle. If we chance to lose it, the position will become such, that we shall be compelled to retire from the Elbe to the Saale."—Norvins, *Portefeuille de* 1813, ii. p. 570.

Note B, p. 214.

FRENCH ARMY AT LEIPSIC.

| | Infantry. | Cavalry. |
|---|---|---|
| *Right Wing.*—Under the King of Naples. | | |
| 8th Corps, Prince Poniatowski, | 8,000 | |
| 2d Corps, Victor, | 16,000 | |
| 4th Corps of Cavalry, Kellermann, | | 3,000 |
| *Centre.*—Under the Emperor. | | |
| A Corps of | 10,000 | |
| 5th Corps, General Lauriston, | 9,000 | |
| 11th Corps, Macdonald, | 15,000 | |
| 1st Corps of Cavalry, General Latour Maubourg, | | 4,500 |
| 2d Corps of Cavalry, General Sebastiani, | | 4,500 |
| 5th Corps of Cavalry, General Milhaud, | | 3,000 |
| *Left Wing.*—Under Ney. | | |
| 6th Corps, Marmont, | 18,000 | |
| 3d Corps, General Souham, | 15,000 | |
| 7th Corps, General Reynier, | 8,000 | |
| 3d Corps of Cavalry, Arrighi, | | 3,000 |

*Behind Leipsic.*

| | Infantry. | Cavalry. |
|---|---|---|
| 4th Corps, General Bertrand, | 15,000 | |

*Reserve.*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Old Guard, Mortier, | 4,000 | |
| Young Guard, Oudinot, | 26,000 | |
| Cavalry of the Guard, General Nansouty, | | 4,800 |
| Grand total, | 144,000 | 22,800 |
| | 166,800 | |

*Detached Corps.*

The 1st and 14th Corps at Dresden, and the 13th Corps at Hamburg. —Vaudoncourt, *Campagne de* 1813, p. 201.

N.B.—Plotho, Kausler, and the German writers, make the French forces 140,000 infantry and 35,000 cavalry; or, in all, 175,000, which is probably near the truth.—Kausler, 932.

ALLIED ARMY AT LEIPSIC.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Austrians under Schwartzenberg: | | |
| Hesse-Homburg, | 20,000 | |
| Meerfeldt, | 20,000 | |
| Klenau | 15,000 | |
| Total, | | 55,000 |
| Russians: | | |
| Wittgenstein, | 20,000 | |
| Barclay de Tolly, | 35,000 | |
| Total, | | 55,000 |
| Prussians: | | |
| Kleist, | 20,000 | |
| Ziethen, | 5,000 | |
| Platoff, | 5,000 | |
| Total, | | 30,000 |
| Army of Blucher: | | |
| Langeron, | 30,000 | |
| York, | 25,000 | |
| Sacken, | 15,000 | |
| Total, | | 70,000 |
| Corps of Giulay, | | 20,000 |
| Total in the field on the first day, | | 230,000 |

*Number of the Allies who fought on the* 18*th.*

| | Infantry. | Cavalry. | Men. | Guns. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Army of Bohemia, Schwartzenberg, | 128,850 | 29,550 | 158,400 | 626 |
| Army of Reserve, Benningsen, | 23,000 | 5,000 | 28,000 | 132 |
| Army of Silesia, Blucher, | 46,000 | 10,600 | 56,600 | 356 |
| Army of the North, Prince-Royal of Sweden, | 36,450 | 11,000 | 47,450 | 270 |
| Grand total, | 234,300 | 56,150 | 290,450 | 1,384 |

—Kausler, p. 931.

# CHAPTER LXXXIII.

NOTE A, p. 321.

No. I.—Extract from the official state of the Allied army, commanded by Lieutenant-General Sir John Murray, at the Col di Balaguer, 17th June 1813, exclusive of officers, sergeants, and drummers :—

| | Present fit for duty. | Sick. | Command. | Horses. | Mules. | Total Men. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| British and German cavalry, . | 739 | 12 | 6 | 733 | ... | 757 |
| British, Portuguese, and Sicilian Artillery, . . . | 783 | 8 | 197 | 362 | 604 | 990 |
| British Engineers and Staff Corps, | 78 | 5 | 36 | ... | ... | 119 |
| British and German Infantry, . | 7,226 | 830 | 637 | ... | ... | 8,693 |
| Whittingham's Infantry, . | 4,370 | 503 | 316 | ... | ... | 5,189 |
| Sicilian Infantry, . . | 935 | 121 | 272 | ... | ... | 1,378 |
| Grand total, . . | 14,181 | 1,479 | 1,466 | 1,095 | 604 | 17,126 |

No. II.—Extract from the original weekly state of the Anglo-Sicilian force commanded by Sir William Clinton, headquarters, Tarragona, 25th September 1813; exclusive of officers, sergeants, and drummers.

| | Present fit for duty. | Sick. | Command. | Horses. | Mules. | Total Men. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cavalry, . . . | 663 | 61 | 215 | 875 | 40 | 939 |
| Artillery, Engineer, and Staff Corps, | 997 | 67 | 58 | 507 | 896 | 1,122 |
| Infantry, . . . | 9,124 | 1,390 | 1,019 | 115 | 429 | 11,533 |
| Grand total, . . | 10,784 | 1,518 | 1,292 | 1,497 | 1,365 | 13,594 |

—NAPIER'S *Peninsular War*, vol. vi. p. 704.

NOTE B, p. 335.

ANGLO-PORTUGUESE FORCE, ON 15TH OCTOBER 1813.

| | Officers, Sergeants, etc. | Rank & File. | Total. |
|---|---|---|---|
| British and German Cavalry and Infantry, . | 5,859 | 37,250 | 43,109 |
| Portuguese ditto, . . . . . | 4,253 | 21,274 | 25,527 |
| Total sabres and bayonets, exclusive of sick and absent on command, | 10,112 | 58,524 | 68,636 |
| Artillerymen and drivers, | | | 4,000 |
| Grand total, . . . . . | | | 72,636 |

ANGLO-PORTUGUESE FORCE, ON 16TH OCTOBER 1813.

| | Officers, Sergeants, etc. | Rank & File. | Total. |
|---|---|---|---|
| British and German Cavalry and Infantry, . | 5,356 | 39,687 | 45,043 |
| Portuguese ditto, . . . . . | 2,990 | 22,237 | 25,227 |
| Total sabres and bayonets, exclusive of sick and absent on command, | 8,346 | 61,924 | 70,270 |
| Artillerymen and Drivers, | | | 4,000 |
| Grand total, . . . . . | | | 74,270 |

—*Morning States*, 15th and 16th October 1813.

NOTE C, p. 370.

SIR ROWLAND HILL'S FORCE AT THE BATTLE OF ST PIERRE.

SECOND DIVISION.

| | Officers and Sergeants. | Rank & File. | Total. |
|---|---|---|---|
| British, | 802 | 5,371 | 6,173 |
| Portuguese, | 277 | 2,331 | 2,608 |
| Le Cor's Portuguese Division, | 507 | 4,163 | 4,670 |
| Total under arms, exclusive of Artillerymen, | 1,586 | 11,865 | 13,451 |

—NAPIER'S *Peninsular War*, vol. vi. p. 706.

# CHAPTER LXXXIV.

NOTE A, p. 398.

BUDGET OF GREAT BRITAIN FOR THE YEAR 1814.

PERMANENT REVENUE.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Customs, | £8,689,068 | |
| Excise, | 19,451,102 | |
| Stamps, | 5,826,363 | |
| Land and assessed taxes, | 7,889,084 | |
| Post Office, | 1,799,206 | |
| Pensions, one shilling in the pound, | 19,504 | |
| Salaries, sixpence in the pound, | 11,992 | |
| Hackney coaches, | 24,081 | |
| Hawkers and pedlars, | 15,910 | |
| Total permanent and annual duties, | | £43,726,210 |
| Small branches of the hereditary revenue, | | 128,666 |

EXTRAORDINARY RESOURCES.

| | |
|---|---|
| Customs, | £3,345,670 |
| Excise, | 6,401,097 |
| Property Tax, | 14,814,101 |
| Arrears of Income Tax, | 1,205 |
| Lottery, net profit, (of which one-third part is for the service of Ireland,) | 334,853 |
| Moneys paid on account of the interest of loans raised for the service of Ireland, | 3,534,255 |
| On account of balance due by Ireland, on joint expenditure of the United Kingdom, | 2,770,000 |
| On account of the Commissioners for issuing Exchequer bills for Grenada, | 60,200 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| On account of the interest of a loan granted to the Prince-regent of Portugal, | £57,170 | |
| Surplus fees of regulated public offices, | 119,226 | |
| Imprest money repaid by sundry public accountants, and other moneys paid to the public, | 121,220 | |
| Total, independent of loans, | | £75,413,873 |
| Loans paid into Exchequer, including the amount of those raised for the service of Ireland, | | 36,078,047 |
| Grand total, | | £111,491,920 |

—*Annual Register* for 1815, p. 322.

PUBLIC EXPENDITURE.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. For interest, &c., on the permanent debt of Great Britain unredeemed, including annuities for lives and terms of years, | | | £40,776,530 |
| 2. Interest on Exchequer bills, | | | 2,256,707 |
| 3. Civil List, | £1,028,000 | | |
| 4. Other charges on the Consolidated Fund, viz :— | | | |
| Courts of Justice, | 74 437 | | |
| Mint, | 16,923 | | |
| Allowances to royal family, | 368,048 | | |
| Salaries and allowances, | 67,559 | | |
| Bounties, | 6,158 | | |
| | | | 1,561,125 |
| 5. Civil government of Scotland, | | | 114,032 |
| 6. Other payments in anticipation of Exchequer receipts— | | | |
| Bounties for fisheries, manufactures, corn, &c., | 244,308 | | |
| Pensions on the hereditary revenue, | 27,700 | | |
| Militia and deserters' warrants, | 138,494 | | |
| | | | 410,502 |
| 7. The Navy— | 11,334,907 | | |
| Victualling department, | 5,774,585 | | |
| The transport service, | 4,852,074 | | |
| | | | 21,961,566 |
| 8. Ordnance, | | | 4,480,729 |
| 9. The army, viz :— | | | |
| Ordinary services, | 16,532,945 | | |
| Extraordinary services and subsidies, | 27,287,234 | | |
| | 43,820,179 | | |
| Deduct the amount of remittances and advances to other countries, | 10,024,623 | | |
| | | | 33,795,556 |
| 10. Loans, &c., to other countries, viz :— | | | |
| Ireland, | 8,723,985 | | |
| Austria, | £1,475,632 | | |
| Denmark, | 121,917 | | |
| France, | 231,731 | | |
| Hanover, | 739,879 | | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Holland, | £267,759 | | |
| Oldenburg, | 10,007 | | |
| Portugal, | 1,500,000 | | |
| Prussia, | 1,330,171 | | |
| Russia, | 2,555,473 | | |
| Sicily, | 316,666 | | |
| Spain, | 586,388 | | |
| Sweden, | 800,000 | | |
| Miscellaneous, | 88,995 | | |
| | | £10,024,618 | |
| | | | £18,748,603 |
| 11. Miscellaneous services, viz :— | | | |
| At home, | | 1,937,018 | |
| Abroad, | | 447,573 | |
| | | | 2,384,591 |
| | | | 126,489,941 |
| Deduct sums which, although included in this account, form no part of the expenditure of Great Britain :— | | | |
| Loan for Ireland, | | £8,723,985 | |
| Interest at one per cent and management, Portuguese loan, | | 57,170 | |
| Sinking Fund on Loan to the East India Company, | | 120,807 | |
| | | | 8,901,962 |
| Total expenditure, | | | £117,587,979 |

—*Annual Register* for 1815, page 342.

NOTE B, page 430.

TROOPS FURNISHED BY THE CONFEDERATION OF THE RHINE TO THE ALLIES.

SECOND CORPS.

| | |
|---|---|
| Oldenburg, | 1,500 |
| Hanover, | 20,000 |
| Brunswick, | 6,000 |
| Bremen, | 8,000 |
| | 35,000 |

THIRD CORPS.

| | |
|---|---|
| Kingdom of Saxony, | 20,000 |
| Duke of Saxe-Weimar, | 2,800 |
| Schwartzburg, | 650 |
| Anhalt, | 800 |
| | 24,250 |

FOURTH CORPS.

| | |
|---|---|
| Hesse-Cassel, | 12,000 |
| Berg, | 5,000 |
| Waldeck, | 400 |
| Lippe, | 650 |
| | 18,050 |

FIFTH CORPS.

| | |
|---|---|
| Wurtzburg, | 2,000 |
| Darmstadt, | 4,000 |
| Frankfort and Isenburg, | 2,800 |
| Reuss, | 450 |
| Nassau, | 1,680 |
| | 10,930 |

SIXTH CORPS.

| | |
|---|---|
| Würtemberg, | 12,000 |

SEVENTH CORPS.

| | |
|---|---|
| Baden, | 8,000 |
| Hohenzollern, | 250 |
| Lichtenstein, | 40 |
| | 8,290 |

—Koch, *Abrégé de Traités de Paix*, x. 357, 358.

Note C, p. 439.

FORCES OF THE ALLIES ON ENTERING FRANCE.

I. GRAND ARMY OF SCHWARTZENBERG.

| *Austrians.* | Battalions. | Squadrons. | Batteries. | Cossack Regiments. | Cannon. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. The first light Division of Count Bubna, | 5 | 30 | 3 | ... | 24 |
| 2. The 2d Light Division of Lichtenstein, | 5 | 18 | 2 | ... | 16 |
| 3. The 1st Corps of Colloredo, | 27 | 12 | 8 | ... | 64 |
| 4. The 2d Corps of Lichtenstein, | 21 | 12 | 8 | ... | 64 |
| 5. The 3d Corps of Giulay, | 25 | 13 | 7 | ... | 56 |
| 6. The Corps of Frimont, | 11 | 26 | 6 | ... | 48 |
| 7. The Corps de reserve of Prince Hesse-Homburg, | 26 | 40 | 26 | ... | 100 |
| 8. | 8 | | | | |
| Total, | 128 | 151 | 60 | | 372 |

*Russians and other Allies.*

| | Batts. | Squads. | Batteries. | Cossack Regiments. | Cannon. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9. The first Allied Corps, or the fifth Corps d'Armée of Wrede, | 30 | 30 | 12 | ... | 76 |
| 10. The seventh Allied Corps, or the fourth Corps d'Armée of Prince Würtemberg, | 15 | 12 | 4 | ... | 24 |
| 11. The Russian or sixth Corps d'Armée of Wittgenstein, | 23 | 20 | 7 | 5 | 72 |
| 12. The Russian reserve of the Archduke Constantine, | 35 | 72 | 15 | 21 | 116 |
| 13. The Prussian Guard, | 8 | 8 | 3 | ... | 24 |
| Total, | 239 | 293 | 101 | 26 | 684 |

—Plotho, iii. Appendix, pp. 13, 14, 15.

*Summary of the Grand Army.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Austrians, | 130,000 |
| Bavarians, | 25,000 |
| Würtembergers, | 14,000 |
| Russians, { Wittgenstein's corps, | 19,350 |
| Russians, { Reserve, | 32,200 |
| Prussian Guard, | 7,100 |
| Guards of the Grand-duke of Baden, | 1,000 |
| The sixth Allied Corps, | 13,000 |
| The eighth Allied Corps, | 10,000 |
| Würtemberg's reserve, | 10,000 |
| Total of the Grand Army, | 261,650 |

II. THE ARMY OF THE NORTH.

*Under the Command of the Crown-Prince of Sweden.*

| | Battalions. | Squadrons. | Batteries. | Cannon. | Pioneer Companies. | Cossack Regiments. | Men. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. The 3d Prussian corps of Bulow, | 45 | 50 | 12 | 96 | 2 | ... | 30,000 |
| 2. The Russian Corps of Winzingerode, | 35 | 30 | 14 | 162 | ... | 19 | 30,000 |
| 3. The 3d German Corps d'Armée, | 32 | 15 | ... | 56 | ... | 2 | 30,000 |
| 4. Walmoden's Corps, | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | 15,000 |
| 5. The Swedish Army, | 28 | 32 | 9 | 62 | ... | ... | 20,000 |
| 6. The 2d German Allied Corps, | 32 | 16 | 4 | ... | ... | ... | 30,000 |
| Total of the Army of the North, | | | | | | | 155,000 |
| 7. Dutch troops, | | | | | | | 10,000 |
| 8. English troops under Graham, | | | | | | | 9,000 |
| 9. Danish infantry, | | | | | | | 10,000 |
| | | | | | | | 184,000 |

—Plotho, iii. Appendix, pp. 29, 40.

III. THE ARMY OF SILESIA.

| | Men. | Batts. | Squads. | Batteries. | Cannon. | Pioneer Companies. | Cossack Regiments. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. The first Prussian Corps d'Armée of York, | 18,931 | 31½ | 64 | 13 | 104 | 2 | ... |
| 2. The second Prussian Corps d'Armée of Kleist, | 20,000 | 37 | 44 | 14 | 112 | 2 | ... |
| 3. The Russian Corps d'Armée of Langeron, | 33,310 | 43 | 28 | 12 | 136 | 5 | 7 |
| 4. The Russian Corps d'Armée of Sacken, | 21,150 | 26 | 24 | 7 | 84 | 1 | 8 |
| 5. The fourth German or Hessian Corps d'Armée, | 20,000 | 25 | 12 | 4 | 32 | ... | ... |
| 6. The fifth German or Duke of Coburg's Corps, | 24,000 | 20 | 11 | 5 | 40 | ... | 3½ |
| Grand Total, | 137,391 | 182½ | 163 | 55 | 508 | 10 | 18½ |

*Summary of the Army of Silesia.*

| | |
|---|---|
| Prussian troops, | 38,931 |
| Russian troops, | 54,460 |
| German Allied troops, | 44,000 |
| Total, | 137,391 |

—PLOTHO, iii. Appendix, p. 26.

IV. THE ARMY OF RESERVE.

| | Men. | Battalions. | Squadrons. | Batteries. | Cannon. | Pioneer Companies. | Cossack Regiments. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Russian reserves under Benningsen, | 50,000 | 63 | 74 | 13½ | 156 | 5 | 10 |
| 2. The fourth Prussian Corps d'Armée under Tauenzein, | 50,000 | 64 | 58 | 17½ | 100 | ... | ... |
| 3. Prussian reserve Corps in Westphalia, under Prince Hesse-Homburg, | 20,000 | 21 | 12 | 2 | ... | 1 | ... |
| 4. The Russian army of reserve under Prince Labanoff, | 80,000 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| 5. Blockading Corps before Glogau, | 15,000 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| 6. Austrian reserve under the Grand-duke of Würtemberg, | 20,000 | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... | ... |
| Total of the Army of Reserve, | 235,000 | 148 | 144 | 33 | 256 | 6 | 10 |

—PLOTHO, iii. Appendix, pp. 41, 50.

*Summary of the whole Allied Armies.*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. The Grand Army under Marshal Schwartzenberg, | 261,000 |
| 2. The army of Silesia under Marshal Blucher, | 137,000 |
| 3. The army of the North under the Crown-Prince of Sweden, | 174,000 |
| 4. The Italian army under Marshal Bellegarde, | 80,000 |
| 5. The army of reserve, | 235,000 |
| Grand total, | 887,000 |

Of which there were,—

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 230,000 Austrians, | In the first line, | 210,000 |
| | In the second line, | 20,000 |
| 278,000, Russians, | In the first line, | 136,000 |
| | In the second line, | 62,000 |
| | In the third line, | 80,000 |
| 162,000 Prussians, | In the first line, | 76,000 |
| | In reserve, | 86,000 |
| 179,000 German Allied troops. | | |
| 20,000 Swedes. | | |
| Total, 887,000 | | |

This does not include the Dutch infantry, 10,000 strong. —Plotho, iii. Appendix, p. 50.

Note D, p. 442.

COMPOSITION AND STRENGTH OF THE FRENCH ARMY.

| | Artillery. | Infantry. | Cavalry. |
|---|---|---|---|
| I. Imperial Guard under Marshal Mortier,— | | | |
| 1. Old Guard— | | | |
| One division of infantry under General Frenant, | | 6,000 | |
| One division of cavalry under General Desnouettes, | | | 2,400 |
| 2. Young Guard— | | | |
| Infantry—Division Christiani, | | 3,500 | |
| Division Rothenburg, | | 6,000 | |
| Division Boieldieu, | | 6,000 | |
| Division Ségur, | | | 1,600 |
| Division Colbert, | | | 1,600 |
| Division Nansouty, | | | 1,600 |
| II. Infantry of the line, | | | |
| The second corps, Victor, | | 8,000 | |
| The third corps, Ney, | | 8,000 | |
| The sixth corps, Marmont, | | 7,000 | |
| The seventh corps, Oudinot, | | 12,000 | |
| The eleventh corps, Macdonald, | | 7,000 | |
| The first reserve division, Charpentier, | | 3,000 | |
| The second reserve division, Laval, (from Spain,) | | 3,000 | |
| The third reserve division, Amey, | | 3,000 | |
| The fourth reserve division, Payol, (National Guard,) | | 3,000 | |
| III. Cavalry of the line— | | | |
| The first corps, Grouchy, | | | 3,000 |
| The second corps, Sebastiani, | | | 3,000 |
| The fifth corps, Milhaud, | | | 3,000 |
| The eleventh corps, Excelmans, | | | 3,000 |
| Dragoon division, Briche (from Spain,) | | | 3,000 |
| IV. Artillery, under Drouot, | 8,000 | | |
| Grand total, | 8,000 | 75,500 | 22,200 |

SUMMARY.

| | Artillery. | Infantry. | Cavalry. |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Guard—28,700 men, | ... | 21,500 | 7,200 |
| 2. Infantry, | ... | 54,000 | ... |
| 3. Cavalry, | ... | ... | 15,000 |
| 4. Artillery, | 8,000 | ... | ... |
| Total, | 8,000 | 75,000 | 22,200 |

*Detached.*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. The first Corps under Maison in Belgium, | | 20,000 |
| 2. The army of the South under Marshal Augereau at Lyons, | | 30,000 |
| 3. The thirteenth Corps under Marshal Davoust in Hamburg, | | 20,000 |
| 4. The army of Italy on the Adige, under Beauharnais, | | 50,000 |
| 5. The army of the Pyrenees and of Aragon under Soult and Suchet, | | 90,000 |
| Garrisons in France, | 80,000 | |
| Garrisons in Holland and the Netherlands, | 50,000 | |
| Garrisons in Germany, | 50,000 | |

GENERAL SUMMARY.

| | |
|---|---|
| I. In France— | |
| The Grand Army under Napoleon, | 105,700 |
| The Army of the South, under Augereau, | 30,000 |
| The Armies of the Pyrenees and of Aragon under Soult and Suchet, | 90,000 |
| Garrisons in France, | 80,000 |
| II. In Holland and the Netherlands— | |
| The first corps under Maison, | 20,000 |
| Garrisons in Holland and the Netherlands, | 50,000 |
| III. In Germany— | |
| The thirteenth corps under Davoust, | 20,000 |
| Garrisons in Germany, | 50,500 |
| IV. In Italy— | |
| The Army of Italy under Beauharnais, | 50,000 |
| Grand total of French forces, | 496,200 |

—Plotho, iii. Appendix, pp. 65, 68.

END OF VOL. XII.

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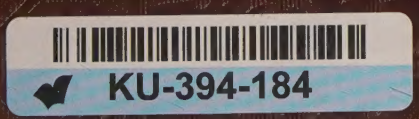
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